

WIRE



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WIRE

ANTHONY WOOD
Founder

A MEMBER OF
THE NAMARA GROUP
WORLD HEADQUARTERS
Units G & H
115 Cleveland Street
London W1P 5PN, England
Telephone 01-580 7522

RICHARD COOK
Editor

JOANNE HARRIS
Advertising & Promotion

PAUL ELLIMAN
Design

JAYNE HOUGHTON
News & Photo Editor

CHRIS PARSONS,
LORRAINE BOWEN
Subscriptions & Administration

JAN DIAKOW
Accounts

CHRIS PARKER
Publisher

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CONTRIBUTORS

Brian Case Nick Coleman
Tim Colwell John Fordham
Charles Fox Andy Hamblin
Max Harrison David Ilic
Nick Kimberley Biba Kopf
Steve Lake Steve Lewis
Graham Lock Kenny Mathieson
Brian Morton Stuart Nicholson
Brian Priestley Mark Sinker
Sue Steward David Toop
Val Wilmer Mike Zwerin
U.S.A.
John Litweiler Peter Pullman
Cynthia Rene
PHOTOGRAPHY
Peter Anderson Chris Clunn
Anton Corbijn David Corin
Jak Kilby Derek Ridgels
Nick White Val Wilmer

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*"I can definitely say that music won't stop. It
will continue to go forward."* CHARLIE
PARKER, 1953



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COVER: Herbie Hancock by Peter Anderson

Bass Clef's Birthday Beano

THIS MONTH SEEN the second birthday for London's Bass Clef Club, still one of the most exciting and uncompromising jazz venues in the country. Peter and Barbara Ind have organised a special month-long celebration in the form of a series of outstanding gigs, including several visitors from overseas.

The month gets off to a dynamo start with the great tenorman George Coleman playing for four nights at the club, September 1-4. George will be backed by John Catchumson, Dave Green and Martin Drew. Eberhard Weber, whose solo set at the Bracknell Festival was one of the weekend's highlights, will be appearing on September 14. And Dulcie Lockwood's band with Gordon Beck, Dave Green and Tony Robinson will be appearing on September 24-25.

Other dates include The Bhandu Boys (6), Jazz Defektors (9), Gaspar Law's Afrifa Oni Band (12 & 15), Clark Tracey Quintet (17), L'Oraquesta De Latin Salsa (19-20), Iain Ballamy Quartet (21), Malaika (27) and Kalama (30).

More dates are still to be confirmed. But one to make note of is a performance of "Pier Rades" by Mike and Kate Westbrook on September 18. This evening is sponsored by *Wire* magazine and we hope many of our readers will be joining us at the club!

Long Weekend

THE THIRDS Westergate Jazz Festival will take place on Sat 27th and Sunday 28th September at Westergate Community College, Ivy Lane, Westergate, West Sussex. Tutors will include Bobby Wellins, Geoff Simkins, Jeff Clynne, Ron Parry and Brian Waite. The course offers professional instruction in improvisation and group playing. Fees are £20, (£15 for students and unwaged).

Enquiries should be made to Nick Sorensen on Eastergate 2921.



LOOK! TIMES GET SERIOUS

New Up North

A NEW JAZZ PROGRAMME will give a showcase for local musicians when it is broadcast simultaneously throughout Yorkshire and Humberside by local BBC radio stations, starting on Friday August 29th. It will be presented by Peter Adamson, who has written, broadcast and taught jazz in the area for many years. The programme, *Great Northern Jazz*, will broadcast from 6.06pm 'til 7.30pm on Fridays. Sheffield will continue its existing jazz programme though it will contribute to the shared series along with Radio Humberside. York and Leeds, Adamson comments: "We'll be bringing the very best of the North's great musical talent to the air."

Jazz Awards International

IN JULY the *Chicago Observer* and the Jazz Preservation Workshop picked *Win* at the post by presenting its First Annual Jazz Awards for 1986. The first two recipients were Terence Blanchard and Donald Harrison for their album released on the Concord label, *Downward*, as best album of the year. Mulgrew Miller won jazz piano soloist of the year for his landmark recording *Kiss To The City*. All these recipients are or have been members of the celebrated *Jazz Messengers*. Two more awards are scheduled to be given

later in the year to tenor sax man William Pierce and composer/saxist Fred Houa.

Plain Jazz

SALISBURY ART CENTRE has a festival from 6-20 September with concerts of every musical description. *Wire* readers may be interested in the following companies: (6th) Phoenix Dance Company, (17th) Ronnie Scott Quartet.

Weather Report Competition

NOW IT CAN be told - the answers to our famous Weather Report video competition back in the May issue. The answers to the questions were: 1. Joe Zawinul, 2. Miroslav Vitous, 3. *Sports' Life*. And nearly everyone got their right.

The first names out of the hat were: Susan Rodler, Cheshire; Ian Waite, Aberdeen, T.C. Boyd, Northern Ireland; Hans Beidermann, Norway, and Diane Graham, Rugby. Congrats to them, commiserations to the rest.

Rumblings in Deepest South

OVER LARK is the ground in South-West England tells us of some happenings... commencing late September will be a series of concerts around the Yeovil area. Promoters in the district are expecting the top names in jazz to play a series of dates throughout the autumn, beginning with the Don Weller/Brian Spring Quartet

at the Bell Inn, Ash, Somerset. Details of final dates and artists from Nod Knowles on (0392) 218368. TV South West has agreed to sponsor a series of eight concerts at Exeter & Devon Art Centre in the autumn, and are filming three of these. The broadcast will go under the banner *TVS Jazz Cafe* and artists under negotiation are Norma Winstone, John Taylor, Bobby Wellins, Jim Mullen, Keith Tippett, Julie Tippett, Pinski Zoo, Courtney Pine and others.

Anglo-German Tour

THE LONDON MUSICIANS COLLECTIVE has its first national tour in September with the main problems finally sorted out. Peter Brottmann was joining the tour but had to pull out due to unavoidable commitments with Last Exit who are playing in Japan at the same time. The LMC line up features Willi Kellers (drums), Alan Tomlinson (trombone), Alex Kolkowski (violin), Alex McGuire (piano), and Mark Thomas (horn). The dates are: (21st) LMC, London; (22nd) Joiners Arms, Southampton, (25th) Bluecoat, Liverpool, (26th) Adelphi Hotel, Leeds, (27th) Exeter and Devon Art Centre; (28th) Moon Club, Bristol.

Finnish Snippets

NEWS FROM Finland includes... The 21st Pori International Festival was a huge success in August. Guests included Oskar Peterson, Art Blakey, Neville Brothers, Chet Baker. Bob Stewart taught for two weeks at Sibelius Academy in August and is expected back soon... SIX and flute man Juhani Juono/Aaltonen got a grant from the government as the third jazz musician in Finland (?). Finns abroad: Young drummer Jukka Uotila performed in Europe in August and apparently is pretty good. Helsinki Sojazz Festival went down a storm! Last month, with Clark Terry, Kenny Barron, Phil Woods, Joe Zawinul, Mel Lewis

N O W ' S T H E T I M E

Chasing Rainbows

A NEW CHANNEL 4 series goes out under this title, beginning on September 14. There'll be seven one-hour documentaries on the multifarious aspects of music and its making in Britain, with interviews with everybody from Joe Loss to Derek Bailey, from Punjabi disco to Southall hip-hop. Since our man David Toop was closely involved in making the series, I'm considering viewing a mandatory business.

Domesday Wire

MANY WILL HAVE HEARD about the BBC's *Domesday Project*, a record of British life in the 80s fashioned after the original *Domesday Book*, 900 years old this year. But did you know that I'm has been included in the archive as one of the few examples of state-of-the-art magazine publishing today? Our celebrated Courtney Pine cover has been preserved for posterity!

Radio Radio Again

HERE ARE MORE dates for the Radio 3 season of *Jazz: Present* programmes: Howard Riley Keith Tippett (6 Sept), Howard Riley (13), Keith Tippett/Louis Mubalo (20), Rex Henrik Wallen (27), Jake Byard/Howard Riley (4 Oct).

Jazz Basement

ON TUES runs The Jazz Basement at Vicenys, South Yeoman Street, Wetherby, every Wednesday night. The turntables feature jazz of many danceable sorts and the club runs till two a. In Admasson is only 50p before 11 and 4.1 thereafter.

South Hill Swing

SAT 111 HILL PARK Arts Centre is holding swing band sessions from 17th September until 17th December, Wednesday evenings from 8-10pm. The group, formed in 1984, is an exciting big band venture with 20 instrumentalists: the line-up consists of five trumpets, five saxes, five trombones and a five-piece rhythm section. The band is working on a varied

repertoire of jazz, swing and big band music. There are vacancies in the trombone section, but all enquiries are welcome. If this style of music appeals to you, contact the band organiser, Gwyn Jones, on Bracknell 425964.

The Sound Kitchen Studios Open

WELCOME TO THE Grand Opening of The Sound Kitchen - a brand-new 16-track recording studio for women. The opening ceremony was attended by about 200 women and a handful of interested or curious males. The Studios were devoted to "train women in 16-track sound recording and portable studio techniques" (at very reasonable rates) and to "run workshops and courses for all women and for black and ethnic (sic) women only". Hand in Capital Radio's Susan Crimp tried to pick holes in the team's women-only policy for her evening news spot, she couldn't dim their confident statements and enthusiastic reasoning.

The studio, funded by Hackney Council, represents a major new opportunity for women in music. Recording studios are the area where women are least represented. A project like this will hopefully turn a new breed of energetic producers onto the streets - and give us a chance to hear if there is such a thing as 'a woman's sound'. It should also begin to shatter the reality of the big commercial studios which tend to be like Boys' Rev Rooms, by making them less mystifying to women musicians and by providing female engineers, at last. Congratulations to all concerned!

The Sound Kitchen occupies the basement suite below the Rio Cinema at 107 Kingland High Street, London E8. For all booking and enquiries about courses contact Women's Media Resource Project, Unit A12, Metropolitan Workshops, Enfield Road, London N1, 011 254 6536.

Sue Steward

Club Dates

NEWCASTLE Corner House
(21st) Clark Tracey Quintet
(Suns) Corner House Jazz Club
(Mons) Ray Stubbs R&B All Stars
(Tues) Ted Warren Quintet
(Weds) Bill's Haircut
(Thurs) Savannah Syncopators
(Frs) Arthur Mowatt Big Band

MANCHESTER Band on the Wall
(4th) New York Jazz
(6th) Blues 'n' Trouble
(9th) Gail Force

(10th) Apitos
(12/13th) Cayenne
(23rd) Victor Brox Big Band
(25th) Clark Tracey
(29th) Rhythmaires

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE Southwell Saracens Head
(25th) Norma Winstone

LINCOLN Roman Ruin
(30th) Clark Tracey Quintet
STAMFORD Art Centre
(19th) Clark Tracey Quintet
GREAT YARMOUTH Ormsby Jazz Club

(27th) Bill Brunskill
IPSWICH Wolsey Theatre
(7th) Acme Jazz Co.

(21st) Spike Robinson
OXFORD St Pauls
(13th) Keith Tippett

HULL Spring St Theatre
(21st) Clark Tracey Quintet
CAMBRIDGE Man on the Moon
(26th) Pete Jacobsen Trio

(28th) Tom Collins Jazzband
PETERBOROUGH Jazz Club
(7th) Cambridge City Jazzband
BRENTWOOD Hermit Club

(7th) Eggy Ley's Hot Shots
(14th) Pete Thomas & Deep Sea Divers

CHELMSFORD Jazz Club
(8th) Essex Youth Jazz Orchestra

COLCHESTER Art Centre
(18th) Lurrie & Carey Bell
(25th) Jazz Turbo

(7th) Whytebridge Jazzband
WATFORD Pump House
(4th) Original East Side Stompers

(11th) Northside Jazzband

(18th) Blue Magnolia Jazz Orchestra

(25th) Ken Sims Dixie Kings
MARKET WEIGHTON Jazz Club

(12th) Martin Jones Quintet
GRANTHAM Kings Hotel

(5th) Terry Lightfoot Band
(28th) High Society Jazz Band

LONDON
BULLS HEAD Barnes
(28th Aug) Terry Smith & Tony Lee Duo

(29th) Stan Tracey Hexad
(30th) Dick Morrissey Stan Robinson Brian Dee Trio

(31st) Peter King
SOUTH BANK CENTRE
Queen Elizabeth Hall

(6th) Thamesday Jazz & Blues Night
Royal Festival Hall

(10th) Kenny Ball/Acker Bilk/George Melly
Purcell Room

(13th) Mint Juleps/Harvey & The Wallbangers
Royal Festival Hall

(22nd) Ella Fitzgerald
Purcell Room

(27th) BBC Jazz Society 25th Anniversary Concert
BARBICAN CENTRE Foyer

(7th lunch) Geoff Warren
(14th lunch) Desmond Selwyn trio

(19th) Chris Payne & Richard McGregor
(21st lunch) Guy Babinet Quintet

(28th lunch) Coup D'Etat
RONNIE SCOTT'S

(1st-15th) Loose Tubes
WARRINGTON Padgate Centre

(30th) Pete King Quartet
LONDON 100 Club

(5th) The Alvin Roy Band
(13th) Blues N Trouble

(14th) Chicago Blues
(20th) George Melly

(24th) Mike Daniels Delta Jazzman
(27th) Louis Armstrong/Fats Waller evening

PRESTON Guildhall
(5th) New York Jazz

(16th) Oyster Band

Airto and Flora

OPEN YOUR EARS, YOU CAN HEAR LATIN



IT IS A PERENNIAL irritation that people who 'need no introduction' always have the most exciting *coronada vitae* to re-examine. So it proves with Mr and Mrs Moreira a.k.a. Flora Purim and Airto, mega-figures of what has been rather lamely labelled 'Brazilian Jazz': their old *Pilofax* pages would read like a potted history of jazz's liaisons with other musics during the last 20 years.

"I liked London when I came in 1969 with Stan Getz," says Flora. "We played at Ronnie Scott's, and the band was Kenny Barron, Miroslav Vitous and Jack de Johnette. I'd only left Brazil two years before to go and find jazz in the States - Airto didn't really want to leave his home country, but he was in love with me so..."

Hubby interjects: "You note the word 'was'! I had gone up to North East Brazil and met Hermeto Pascoal, who only played accordion at the time. Despite the fact that he looks about 200, he's only two years older than me. He's a real genius, and we influenced each other a lot."

"We had a little group that played in bars and were looking for someone who could sing in a different way - cry, laugh, scream, make the sounds of birds. We wanted to use the voice as an instrument, rather than trying it to singing lyrics. We found Flora."

"The first couple of years in America were harder for me since I didn't speak English, before I got the gig with Miles Davis. Then I joined Flora in the original Return To Forever. I switched to traps and played like I had in those Brazilian bars, but everyone went crazy and thought Chick had invented a new music!"

Flora is less cynical. "I'm really grateful to Chick. Sarah Vaughan and Ella Fitzgerald had turned him down before he came to me. He wrote some great songs just for me - he'd sing them down the phone to me as soon as he'd finished them because he was so excited!"

Thus it was that Airto revolutionised jazz percussion while Flora broke the Astrud Gilberto mould. She plugged scar singing into the sounds of the forest and Al Jarreau, Tania Maria and Norma Winstone are just three who should be paying rates on the way that was paved for them.

For Flora this phase came to fruition with her legendary Milestone albums of the mid-70s, which remain benchmarks of excellence. Assembling a repertory company of crack musicians to accompany her, she developed a musical world rich with multi-layered vocals, delicate supportive percussion (courtesy of Him Indoors) and a burning rhythm section (often comprising George Duke, Alphonso Johnson and Ndugu). Nor was she just a pretty voice, often composing and arranging. But success sowed the seeds of its own destruction, and the Trojan horse was a \$1 million offer from Warner Bros.

"It was too good to turn down, but it was awful. Suddenly I had no say in production or even repertoire. They invested a lot of money in me, and wanted me to crossover and become a superstar. I had to do a press tour two weeks before I set off with the band, and then I couldn't understand where my voice had gone when it came to the gigs! In the end I got so uncomfortable trying to appeal to white middle-class Americans, I was losing the reason for singing."

A classic tale of woe which resulted, in 1981, in a sabbatical from the studio ended by last year's *Humble People*. Released on Concord, it's the first record to come with double billing, apparently as a matter of

necessity. Airto elaborates.

"For four years we were waiting to find a record company that would let us do what we do best without interference. Concord have done that and we're so happy with them we've already completed another album. Meanwhile we've been working hard during that time, for anything up to nine months of the year. We got back to the original musician's situation, you play, they pay, and everyone has a good time. Also I wrote a Brazilian Mass - five movements, a 62-piece orchestra and a big choir. Gil Evans helped, since I don't write music, and it was recently recorded in Germany and released on the Harmonia Mundi classical label."

Shades of Ellingtonian Sacred follies perhaps, since the final product is largely rugged, pretentious bombast - but then one always expects great artists to have impeccable (i.e. corresponding to one's own) taste. In this respect Airto's enduring penchant for including macho guitar licks in his music also strikes in the eardrum. Steering the conversation back to more congenial composition, how did he as a percussionist go about his songwriting?

"Two different ways usually. I invent a bass line in my head, and improve it and think about it for a long time. When I'm sure I haven't stolen it from anywhere, I sit at the drums or use a drum machine and work on the rhythms. Then I get an acoustic guitar - Flora plays well so she usually helps here - and work on the harmony. Then comes melody and finally the lyrics. Alternatively the whole thing comes more or less at the same time."

Hardly surprising then that the songs often sound better when not sung in English, a bit like opera. It's a problem which has dogged both Flora and Airto's oeuvre since the early days of Neville Porter's cosmic exhortations which married Chuck Corea tunes such as "Open Your Eyes You Can Fly". The platitudes spill over into the conversation sometimes as Flora talks about the spirit that is within us all and the need to love one another. Hearing her sing live or chatting to her as she sits in a pink wig and white turban, her natural warmth and evident honesty make one almost ready to believe it all.

As a 44-year old grandmother her commitment to music remains undiminished, and one should be thankful for whatever philosophy gives her this durability. The catholicity of taste which causes her fans to wince on occasion is also the key to one of the common threads of genius she shares with her husband: "Our music is 'Brazilian out of Brazil' - I'm only going back for the first time in 19 years this August, so my singing and writing is a mixture of Brazilian from memory plus a lot of jazz - the only music for improvisation!"

Brian Glasser



SOME RECORDS

Flora: *Butterfly Dreams*, *Stories To Tell*, *Open Your Eyes You Can Fly*, *Encounter*, *That's What She Said* (all *Milestone*), *Every Day, Every Night* (*Warner*), *Humble People* (*Concord*).

Airto: *Identity*, *I'm Fine How Are You*, *Touching Me Touching You* (*Warner*), *Promises Of The Sun* (*Arista*), *A Qui Se Puede* (*Latino*).

N O W - S - T H E T I M E

• Do you like good music? Sweet soul music? Alan Omokhoge does, and his Edinburgh-based Move Records has plenty of it on offer. Having built up a useful reputation in indie circles, Move have branched out from their reggae and soul beginnings into regular new jazz releases, aiming for a schedule of monthly additions to the half dozen titles already available.

The urge to start a record label first afflicted Alan when working with Arista, and finally crystallised when the frustrations of trying to sign the bands he wanted to an unreceptive Tamla Motown proved too much. The choice of Edinburgh was basically to get away from London; adding jazz to their list is the product of his own growing enthusiasm.

"Jazz is very slow in sales terms, and we really support it through the success we have with our soul releases, but I'm very committed to it. I'm looking to build up a good jazz catalogue through the albums we license from Europe and America, and once we've established that, look to start signing up bands of our own. If something good comes along, though, we won't say no - that's really my only criterion for this label: it has to be good. I don't want us pigeon-holed as doing just one kind of music, or even one kind of jazz."

Move actually acquired rights to the large Scandinavian label S stunt Records back in 1984, but releases have been on hold up until this year while the commercial ground was laid. The initial two records both came from this extensive catalogue, featuring the Latin-influenced Danish band Arel and an impressive Swedish four-piece with the very un-Swedish (actually Swahili) name Mwendo Dawa, their densely textured *Street Lines* is the most interesting release so far

on Move. These were followed by a disappointing Gary Boyle outing, *Friday Night Again*, American tenor Mel Martin's jazz-funkish band Listen with *She Who Listens*, and Memphis guitarist Gerard Harris & Dialog's eclectic *Joseph's Path*.

The S stunt catalogue will continue to provide material for a long time, including six more Mwendo Dawa albums; other more immediate plans include a series of 'taster' compilations, *The Move Jazz Reports* (following their successful *Move Into Soul* series), and albums from American unit Con Brio, Bob Ackerman, the 11-piece German outfit Die Elefanten, Danish band Ocean Fables, English saxophonist Jamie Talbot, and an Australian singer, Marie Wilson, whom Alan swears is on a par with Ella Fitzgerald. Move also pride themselves on setting high visual standards for their product, largely inspired by his admiration for ECM's impeccable presentation.

Not content with that, Move have just helped launch a second label, in collaboration with a young musician, David Galbraith. Watercourse will be aimed at pulling in local musicians from diverse areas in a creative crossover not catered for by more commercially oriented outlets; their first release, *The Dolphin Club's* highly structured, conceptual mini-album *Out Of The Blue*, features a number of the younger jazz regulars on the local scene in a nine-piece line-up, led by Galbraith (disguised as David Marin). He is currently trying to raise funds to set up a permanent 16-track recording facility for the label that will fit the requirements of Dolphin Club's spacious, multi-textured music, prior to recording their second album later this year.

Move and Watercourse have doubled the Scottish-based jazz



DIE ELEFANTEN: MEN ON GOLD

Move!

A SCOTTISH INDIE WELCOMES THE CATS

label count, joining Alastair Robertson's HEP Records and Elliot Meadow's currently inactive GFM, a noteworthy development in itself in these recessionary times. In a wider context, the current flood of great re-issues from the music's past makes it all too easy to forget that its future begins with labels like Move, concentrating on new jazz, new

bands, new music, making available material that bigger concerns won't touch - not yet, anyway. Jazz needs its indie scene, and Move deserve support; their records are distributed nationally through Charly, so check out what they're into, and help these soulful jazz newcomers to move on up.

Kenny Mathieson



THE SOUND OF AFRICA

BY MARK SINKER

Talking to DAN DEL SANTO — NY-bred band-leader from Austin (Texas), keen student of Nigerian Afro-Beat, first to catch hold of the name World-Beat for his own music — about his song "Free Fela" will be still be using it: "If we sing it now, the message is, Keep Fela Free," he smiles. "And with him, that's a very relevant thing." As it is Fela free has become (NISA's) Fergue-figure: permanent lead-para copy. Our excuse this time is that the mouth-lord is touring, at last, Fête l'Humanité, Paris (not Texas), Sept. 13, States early October, Royal Albert Hall late same.

Ho-Hum: your news-hound's now has been in neutral since WOMAD (for treatment of which see elsewhere), too much information flashing by all now forgotten. What do we remember? That OUSMANE SACKO & YAKIERE DIERATÉ, a husband-and-wife guitar/singer team will be at London's Camden Centre Oct. 30. That ARTS WORLDWIDE, who are bringing them here, are also sending MARIA RODRIGUEZ — who performs, in Venezuela, merengues, Caribbean coastal songs, Cuban boleros — to Camden, Birmingham, Manchester, Coventry, Derbyshire, and back to Camden between Oct. 11 and 18, and that they're also releasing records by AZIZ EL MURAK, ABDEL GABIR, MOHAMED GEBARA — the three Sudanese musicians who toured Britain last year — and a set by Nigerian apala musicians AHUJI DAJI DA OMIWI BA & band. And then we remember that we first read all this in AFRICA HEAT, finally back on the streets, and that AB is planning an October issue to include an A-Z of all London/African bands: if you want a copy, or think you should be in it, send word to 10 Woodbury Street, London SW17 9RR. It costs 60p, but I guess the Post Office will demand their cut somewhere along the line.

After all of which I was intending to close with a lecture on African concepts of time: but I seem to have run out of it, or at least its (dubious) analogue space. So, till we meet again (when you can explain exactly why it is that this column is sometimes 'New' and sometimes not), help yourself to this Which I stole off TV — ALL MAZRETT's series "The Africans" — because I couldn't decide if I liked it or not: "You are not a country, Africa. You are a glimpse of the infinite."

After all, you could just as well say the same about Asia. But is Maerni rhapsodising or simply quoting? And if quoting, whom?

IN A LATIN GROOVE

BY SUE STEWARD

Latin all-dayers Latin all-movers, six and two concerts a week of legends from the record sleeves of Latin Music, London has been deep in A Latin Groove since June — time for a retrospective breather. The hot weather always makes English people look for tropical/exotic music — and the obligatory summer hit, WILLY COLON's single "Set Me On Fire" came at the right time.

The Brazilians set the pace when FLORA PEREM and ARTO GAVE a spectacular show. Arto's tambourine solo is still getting culprits. Then CAHERETO GIL picked up the baton and passed it round his band. The percussionist — a tiny dreadlocked sprite, known in Portuguese as "TITI CABBAGE" — always steals a Gil show with his relentless, one-man band. This night the highspot was his duet with Gil on acoustic guitar in a

traditional Bahian *forró* — with "Cabbage" playing triangle. Now triangle and tambourine have never carried particularly potent images here — at school both implied lack of aptitude in anything else. In *forró*, the triangle is played hard, for melody and rhythm, like a cowbell (causous ethnomusicologists consult BRAZILIAN CONTEMPORARY ARTS, 1 Vaughan Ave., London W6 for info — not me!). After a calmer night from MILTON NASCIMENTO, the SPANISH tongue dominated in an unprecedented stream of SALSA flown in from the European festivals. The meaning of salsa is now more nebulous than ever, and the variety of musics passing under its banner may leave you baffled. Just take it as Afro-Cuban in root, Caribbean-inspired, Spanish-spoken, dance music. Oh, then there's merengue — not Cuban at all! Always expect extraordinary solos and vocalists.

CELIA CRUZ arrived with LITO PENA. Both seemed slightly fatigued by the rigours of summer festivals. This was Celia's annual reassurance that she still wears the Crown of Salsa. Her first steps on stage are greeted with a roar, every move of her fluid body (in a dress like mercury) brings another, and when she opens her mouth the audience enters trance state. Her power reminds me of JAMES BROWN or AL GREEN — it's as complex and overwhelming as both, somewhere between religion and sex. One highspot of her set, as last year, was the 20-minute version of "Bembé Colorá" with the in-built audience response of "Colorá." Most songs are long-standing favourites; but her improvisations — which need a Spanish ear to value the skill — every one created fresh ripples. Welcome back to London, Celia. Puente's set seemed to my ears a little jaded and heavy, it actually suffers from repetition of the same material, like "Oye Como



CELIA CRUZ IN WEST LONDON

Va", jazz and Latin standards, whereas Celia's fresh interpretations keep them interesting. Puente's timbales and vibes are, naturally, still a treat.

A week later, on the same stage, but with barely an audience, WILLY COLON played. The show became very intimate and special — except for the promoter. The band clearly enjoyed it. Colon has chosen percussion, bass, and synths to supplement his own vocals and trombone. Whereas RUBÉN BLADES a month before was seen to transfer the central horns of salsa into RICHARD MARRIOTT's synth sound, Willie Colon's two synth players were equipped with a fiendish oral device which transformed them into a muted trombone section. Colon's inserted his own horn — a feat for musicians like ANNIE WHITFIELD and RASHI to the audience, and others of us who still live his '70s productions as much for his own kung, deep sweeps as for his overall arrangements. Willie's voice is confidently settling, stylistically, the nasal twang which seems typical of male Puerto Rican singers gives way to a surprising softness on his salsa-lunk numbers. His ample stocks of golden oldies were raided for themes of lust, pain, anger and outrage. He did a great version of HILTON LAVORI's song, "Che Che Cale" — which you might remember sent the heroines of NOTORAFI SHANAK's *For Colored Girls* into delirium. And he gave both versions of the single, and plenty of the recent material which incorporates a Brazilian and Caribbean quality into the voices and horns.

More Cubans-in-exile arrived hot on Celia Cruz's heels. Saxophonist PAQUITO D'RIEIRA brought his band of Brazilians, RONALDO BERRIOJA

N O W S T H E T I M E



from Havana, and a Jewish keyboard, harmonica player (sorry, no name) Paquito's music (like his frame) has fleshed out since his arrival in New York in '80. His easy stage manner, warm patet and superb technical skills on tenor, soprano and clarinet make him a pleasure to see. Unlike the Colon gamble, this last-nighter booking paid off. Paquito played to delighted Cubans — including writer GABRIEL *Three Trapped Tigers* CARRERA INFANTE, who wrote one song — musicians, jazzers, funkies, and an enraptured dancer who looked like he was auditioning for IDJ all night long, and knew every number. Undoubtedly an original JAZZ ROOM habituee — where I first heard this great man. Paquito and Rodri on flugelhorn cut through references from bop, standards, showtunes and their own work with the ease of consummate musicians. The training and experience with Cuba's finest "jazz" band, INAKFIRE, is revealed in that *everything* played is strictly Cuban — even when it is strictly jazz. The crucial ingredients seem to exist on a molecular level: deep within the music's structure. Close inspection locates you in Ignacio's drum kit, but he is rarely seen to use any part to play specific or recognisable Cuban motifs. Nevertheless, it is *his* playing which builds the unmistakably Cuban lilt, an underlying clave, all of its own.

After the second show, the band visited RONNIE SCOTT's for ARYURO SANIKWAL's first night. Diplomatic details prevent Paquito from playing with Sandoval but no such restrictions apply to the harmonica player, who evidently stunned the audience with his transformation of that instrument into a horn, matching up with Sandoval's.

The following sunny Sunday, Haringey's Festival Against Racism brought RAY BARRETTO's band blanketing into the daylight like moles. "This is the middle of the night for us," he commented, rather dilly, as he faced a desultory few hundred people in this vast park at noon. Sadly, the later-comers missed a good show, and their presence would have added lustre. They missed the pleasure of seeing Barretto's subtle overloading of his superbly capable young band — whose singers and bristling rimbales player were *raas*. Ray in turn traded solos with the percussionists, goading them into fast realisations; his wry comments and teasing maintained a public good mood, but sadly this band acted as a warm-up for EDHIE PALMIERI's. Chewing on an old cigar stub, Eddie hunches over the piano, rarely taking his gaze off the audience. His solos were kept quite short, except the first, long, impressionistic revival of the masterwork on *Son Of Latin Man*, "Un Du Bonito". As a solo approaches, eyes swivel towards him, hearts stop, and he rears rhytms from the keys, building up to climaxes of impassioned thumpings (MISCHA MENLIFBERG kept coming into my mind). From that scar he engages with this strapping band, power-packed with four horns and four percussionists, spiralling upwards into a gigantic salsa *mélée*. The audience was full, hot and vocal by now, and the band responded with a stunning set which drove some of us home early, fully saturated.

This spate of Latin guests closes with Sandoval's three weeks at Ronnie Scott's (review to come), and back with the Brazilians when MARIA MARIA will make two shows of Brazilian fusion and demonstrate her superb scar talents.

September is quieter, but the BASS CLIFF hosts a couple of Paris and Amsterdam based outfits (L'ORQUESTRA DE LATIN NAENA and ANIGUSTO respectively).

N B This column is totally London-based because I live here. Are there any Latin grooves outside London now? Tell me.

Otherwise, keep buying the records, follow the DJs, and rry runing into DJ TOYMEK's Salsa Show on pirate station, STARPOINT, Sundays 10-midnight, 86.2m FM. Next month is the long-awaited visit from the Grandest of salsa bands, EL GRAN COMBO DE PUERTO RICO, currently celebrating 25 years playing (mostly with the same musicians). That gig brings MONDO DE LONDRES out of their recording retreat. Yay!

ROUND UP THE USUAL SUSPECTS

By BIBA KOPF

summer humbug and how to avoid it. First, arm yourself with a powerful gheroblaster. Second, load it with a cassette magazine consisting of the following — guaranteed to clear beaches.

1) ZOVHET FRANCE's "Gris" 10" (No Man's Land via Recommended Records) offers a way of taking the sink of the city street onto the beach. Wrapped in a tatmac strip, it has all the hallmarks of British cottage industry surrealism and is no less appealing for that. A mess of home-edited tapes crazily loop each other, spinning a dense interweave of noise and voice in mildly eccentric patterns. Take the title track "Gris" down Whitley Bay — Monsieur France is Geordie — and you'll never be short of beachspace.

2) Of all British cottage industry surrealists NURSE WITH WOUND are the most obsessive and prolific. Steeped deep in the dank decay of London's nerherwood of soot-encrusted semis and back-to-backs, they strip its veneer of respectability like it was rotting flesh. Their sleeves display melded metal and human meat, bizarre bone grafts and skeletons in various bondage configurations — all drawn up with draughtsmanlike accuracy. Just so are their music's mechanical assemblies of skittered rock, tape snippets and queasy electronics. The sinewy chainaw copulation of "I Was No Longer His Dominant" (from the compilation *Auto-Mating* on United Dairies) disturbingly evokes the seamy nature of English mass murder. Ideal for Beighton beach party massacres.

3) Sister group CURRENT 91 do for the church what *new* do for English suburbs. They rake juvenile delight in defiling the sacred, but there's fun to be had in their percussion-heavy ritual workouts. Like the sensitively titled "In Menstrual Night" from their United Dairies pic disc. A favourite in Skagness.

4) Californian beach bum turned scrap metal scavenger, sculptor and solo percussionist extraordinaire, Z'EV moved to Holland because his monumental music was unsettling the San Andreas Fault. "Element/L" (from *My Favorite Things* — Subterranean compilation) simulates surface calm through Z'EV's frantic flurry of accents and bears played so fast the sound has no time to decay. The whole is phased into a tremendous whoosh of noise suggested by its title. Z'EV's idea of a time change is the soundforce of continental shelves shifting. Watch the waves recede along with the crowds as Z'EV accompaniment and Rockaway in peace forevermore.

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ANITA BAKER

The deep dark soul

WORDS, RICHARD COOK

PHOTOGRAPHY, CONEYL JAY

SHE HAS CLOSED HER EYES

The band plays a slow, rough-textured groove, flesh laid on the dark bones of the bass. Three women set up a vocal counterpoint, rich with vibrato, but the singer's work is to beat a space out of her surroundings.

She takes the line — "been so long, I'm missing you baby" — and opens out the vowels, swallows the substance, stretches out into a long rising moan. Her right arm contours into a clutch against her body — as if she is trying to cover her heart. The long "ee" of "baby" puns back the plauding soul of the song.

"When it's perfect, I go away somewhere and I don't come back till the song is over. It's like closing your eyes for the duration of the song and opening them at the end. It's not from my mind, it's not a forethought, it's a fore-feel."

She has closed her eyes. Her make-up woman dusses one of the lowered hoods. Away from the stage, Anita Baker is doing her press chores on a Royal Wedding morning. She is a tiny flame, barely five feet tall: when her eyes open, they glitter with mischief.

"I guess it's easier to sing sad songs, 'cause you take your happy moments for granted so much. A few minutes ago, when I was told I was just this far away from a gold album, I could've sung a happy song. It's a damn shame, but it's true. It's easy to touch a sad song."

"If it kicks me in the chest, I want to sing it. If I get into the lyrics later. If I can't bring anything else to a song I like, I won't do it."

CAN THIS BE RIGHT, WHEN SHOULD

WE BE THINKING, I'VE FINELY

SOME TIMES AND I'M ASKED UP AGAIN.

ANITA BAKER has made two records, *The Songstress* and *Rapture*, which are a pinnacle of contemporary soul balladry. Every song bar "Watch Your Step" moves to a tempo that had gone out of style in the rise of black techno-pop. She swirls through these long, tempered, outpouring poems.

Most of the lyrics are no more than average love song cloth. The magic is partly in her astounding strength and imagination, partly

in the tenderness of her love-laith. *The Songstress* is a singer's benediction, a voice gently placed forward and left to transfix with its own power, there's been nothing like it since Randy Crawford's *Rou Selb*. The recent *Rapture* is more sophisticated in production terms, more shrewdly upholstered for radio success, but Baker's own performance is steadfast. She holds a line like "caught up in its rapture of love" with such lustrous belief that rapture is exactly what is evoked.

In concert, she works on the edge of tumult. The records suggest a private, introverted performer but she gives the audience everything, carelessly switching the set order, running the stage with a manner that flirts with showbiz soul but roughens as soon as the music starts. Crucially, she doesn't try and improvise new vocals: she studies her recorded phrasing as intently as the actual lyrics, and the result is a rare concentration. Next to the usual ritual of clapping nonsense, this show is close to devastating.

"It's a he-i-t difference," she sighs, thinking of the singer of records and the one who does shows. "When you do a record over, each time you do it it'll be different, each verse. The studio is very precise. The stage is live — you can choreograph every step and write dialogue but that's what happens in the studio. I think it out and deal with spontaneity live."

Is the stage dangerous?

"You know, I never thought of it like that. Not dangerous... damn, why can't I say anything this morning? Every time I sing now, I know there's someone out there with a pencil and paid judging me. There's a danger with that. I can try and second-guess the press. But I have no choice. When the band starts up, the natural me comes out."

"The connection is real important. Jazz I think is a more selfish medium. Really, you're playing for yourself. You're doing a riff or a line that might sound dissonant to the audience — it's real personal or selfish, though that's okay. Shall I comb my hair now?"

Yet in front of the reassuring music, she is still alone. The singer's art is the loneliest in music. Caught between speech and sound, released by the music but dependent on it too. The loneliness forges its own solace: a creator's solitude.

"Yup. This is the first time I've travelled with anybody but for the next three days, my boyfriend has to get another room. I have to be alone before I sing. That's the way it's always been. I crave being alone."

"If I'm with people all day for three days, at the end of the third day I'll fix it so I have a day alone. I've been a loner since I was a kid. People drain me — feels like I'm always performing. I have to be cheery and bright."

"I've met entertainers and been real enthusiastic and they've gone *(completely deadpan)* hi, how are you. I don't want anybody to get that from me. If I feel blasé, I'll fix it so that I'm alone."

"If it's happening the way it should, then you are alone. I love the album cover because that's what happens when it goes right — I just kinda close up. You can't turn it on and off like a faucet."

I WON'T BE NEGLECTED, I WON'T BE

FURNISHED, THE PLEASURE OF YOUR

KISSES, THE PLEASURE OF YOUR SMILE.

THE DEEP SOUL is as historical now as the Lindy Hop. Deep soul, with its low majestic ache and operatic passion, seemed a dead force in black music, at least as far as the mainstream was concerned. Now another tide has turned.

"It's coming back. Then it'll go away again. *The Songstress* is a perfect example. It was done in 1983 when nobody was doing ballads, the market was full of dance-oriented music, but it found a small loyal audience. It wasn't music for the masses but since Whitney Houston, Sade, Freddie Jackson, there's an epidemic now. In a year's time the company might say, Anita, you gotta do a rap record."

Surely she would say no.

"I'd say. I know how internal things work. I'd put one rap tune on an album. And it would have to be close to what I'm doing in a rap form. Someone just coming in and doing whatever they want on my project, that's a definite no."

"I make compromises all the time, even with this album. The company wanted big-name producers — I understood it, I didn't slap it in the face. What I did was use one of them,



THE SLOW BALLAD IS ALIVE AND LIVING IN THIS SINGER'S VOICE

Marti Sharron—straight-ahead technopop. But not that style of production. "We all got what we wanted."

The commercial sheen of *Rapture* cannot stop its emotional core shining through. It's hard to find words for such a sound—and hard to reason why the sorrowful power of deep soul, like that of Sister Young and Albert Ayler, can be so uplifting, can bring such well, happiness. There are many ways to burst into tears.

"I never burst into anything," she says, "but yeah. The one that comes to mind is Jermaine Jackson and Whitney Houston's tune, 'Take Good Care Of My Heart.' I just said it, and I got a chill."

You can almost touch the tenderness in The Songstress's voice.

"I'm in love this week, and it touches that. It's that smile and cry."

What will she do next?

"Oh—comb my hair."

I KNOW NOT HOW TO EXPRESS MY DEVOTION. I WANT A BRIGHTER WORLD THAN BRIGHT, A FAIRER WORLD THAN FAIR.
(JOHN KEATS)

JVC North Sea Jazz Festival

THE HAGUE

THE ORGANISERS CLAIM that North Sea is the biggest jazz festival of its kind in the world. With live jazz simultaneously in 13 locations throughout the massive Congressgebouw, jazz videos in four locations plus the International Jazz Federation's jazz photo exhibition, who's going to argue with them? With so much going on, the complex and interlocking timetable is basic survival technique, and cause for much gnashing of teeth when it occasionally drifted out of sync. But the music, so good and frequently excellent, soon dispelled any notions of insurrection.

Miles Davis was on hand to open the Festival, presiding over the middle-aged fusion junta of Zawinul (54), Wayne Shorter (53) and John McLaughlin (44), all of whom marched their young, bright-eyed crossover foot-soldiers to the top of the hill and back down over the weekend. Even with his re-jugged band, Miles was ahead, but only on points – no knockout punch here. "You're Under Arrest" announced the arrival of guitarist Robben Ford, a throwback to the dark days of Mike Stern, and with "Nature Boy" the audience were whistling and singing along to the theme, which says much of where Miles is at these days. A version of "Time After Time", however, was highly

inventive. The trumpeter seemed to linger on each chord for as long or short as he wanted – a harbinger of a new direction?

The Studio 2000 was home for a series of sophisticated piano recitals, and it was John Hicks who took the opportunity to impress with a hugely undervalued talent. His firm, assertive phrases and technicolor technique marked him apart from the distinguished cast that followed. Then deep underground for a set of blistering bebop from the New York All Stars that included the Heath Brothers (Percy and Jimmy), Jimmy Owens and Slide Hampton. Pianist Hilton Ruiz demonstrated the gulf between his recorded work and the heights his temperamental technique can take him, spurred on by band and crowd alike.

Up and up to the roof terrace to hear the Festival presentation being given to David Murray, whose eulogy thanking everyone for making it possible included all, omitting none. Formalities over, he was joined by Oliver Lake, Julius Hemphill and Hamiet Bluiett, who as the World Saxophone Quartet are the foremost chamber group in jazz today. "Hattie's Wall" opened a set that refracted in greater detail than usual the tradition of the big-bad saxophone sections of Ellington and Lunceford. Included was "Sophisticated Lady", the old Harry Carney feature which Bluiett did in reverse – that is to say he started with the long, double-breathing sustain that Carney finished with – a sumptuous set. Zawinul's Weather Update (sans Shorter) almost immediately dissolved into who-does-what-when confusion as his "Dialects" charts were expanded for the new band, doing justice to neither past nor present. The perfect 1.30 am set seemed to be the pairing of Jim Hall and Michel Petruccianni.

But master-craftsman Hall's hushed, carpet slipper inventions subdued Petruccianni. A dynamic pianist, he was mesmerised by Hall as they crept around in circles of sotto-voice chords where any rise in volume would be like calling the vicar a liar mid-vespers. Into the bright lights for Gil Evans and a top-notch orchestra that included the impressive lead and solo chops of trumpeter Lew Soloff with George Adams, Chris Hunter and John Surman in the sax section. Would that "Hotel Me" had gone on all night...

On Saturday, Richie Cole and Alto Madness launched into two free-wheeling sets that demonstrated the power of positive swinging. With the exception of his widely admired solo on "Jeanne", Cole's recorded work in no way prepares you for the all-hands-on-deck commitment to bebop that belies any reference to "Madness". He's moved out of the shadow of Phil Woods to the extent that his alma mater, recently in Ronnie's, sounds tame (albeit more considered) in comparison.

high time his spirited *just de vivre* had UK exposure. Pianist Ahmad Jamal is another who's not been served well on record (in recent years). His cat-and-mouse game of tension and release, fortissimo cadences and tiptoe pianissimo ostinatos spiced with spectacular rococo flourishes is stunningly original, but the group lack the subtle telepathy of the old Israel Crosby/Vernell Fournier group. In contrast, Jimmy Rowles is both witty and acerbic, rather like a series of whispered dirty jokes – no-one dares say anything in case they miss the punchline. Then a quantum leap from a semi-acoustic Rowles to McCoy Tyner's Kawai Grand force-fed through the megaton sound system of the Tuin-Paviljoen, where decibels are measured on the Richter scale.

One of the great pianists in jazz, it was unnecessary to detract from his bracing aural therapy by saddling him with Freddie Hubbard and Joe Henderson. Freddie seemed to have stepped down from cloud cuckoo-land for the concert, and has taken on the mantle of pleasing de white folks from Louis, right down to mugging (tasteless gestures) and rolling eyes. He hit the pits when he interrupted a Tyner solo to thump out a bass-line for Avery Sharp.

Then up again to the roof terrace to see the most important musician of the 80s, David Murray with his *Moray* Swag quartet (except for Ray Drummond on



WILLIE BREUER

L I V E W I R E

bass). An improviser of stunning ability, yet style answers to no-one, yet draws on the whole saxophone tradition of jazz, he and his quartet represent the state-of-the-art. Later he was joined by special guest Hamiet Bluiett, not an inconsiderable talent himself, but the effect was rather like having the best looking partner at a party all to yourself when somebody cuts in.

On Sunday, de-Seung Branford Marsalis with Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Al Foster opened the final day with aspirations of high seriousness and not a little pomp. Branford dwelt long and hard bringing the ethos of his saxophone romances to jazz, while Hancock, whose playing never seems to come from the inner-man, was fashioned by his surroundings. The royalty of their performance was less than the sum of the musicians involved, and the choice of material played no small part in dissipating their efforts. Al Foster, however, made up for years of sucking it to 'em with Miles, demonstrating a formidable technique and impeccable taste. Then underground for Arr Blakey's revamped Messengers, with Wallace Roney continuing the production line of young trumpeter starters. Exciting yes, but not at the plateau of excellence achieved with Terence Blanchard as musical director. Now it's back to the backbeat, for the time being at least. Blakey, as ever, sweated each stroke with intuitive inspiration, and sounded timeless. But

up in the Twin Pavilion, ex-employee Wayne Shorter stared down the barrel of his soprano, committing artistic suicide in a mid-70s fu-zack groove, his cerebral saxophone jousting the rhythms of rock.

Despite the orgy of Stareside talent, the festival highlight was provided by the home side's William Biecker Kollektief, the most exciting jazz act extant. "Jazz act" is used advisedly. Their eclectic bravura respects no boundaries; Harry James and Albert Ayler appear as musical bedfellows, polka and swing dissolve into a Mingus bribe and it's all underlined with vaudevillean ham. They deserve international acclaim – until now it was the job of the avant garde to shake up the mainstream. But now subvert the Kollektief's unrepentant iconoclasm larded with humour and exuberance to underline the simple message that jazz is often at its best when the heart rules the head.

They effortlessly eclipsed the preening night-glo of Carla Bley's sextet, impotent without instrumental resources – I mean, Steve Swallow may get on well with the handleader, but there's a limit to how long you can feature bass solos. Mahavishnu were one of the four bands wending up the festival, and just their name evoked magical memories from the early days of crossover music. But the inner mounting flame has gone out, in its place John McLaugh-

lin's high-tech energy playing, thrown into stark relief alongside Miles' man who never was, saxist Bill Evans, wandering in their infernal musical territory between nothingness and the bank balance in search of their shared goal.

Stuart Nicholson

Montreal Festival MONTREAL

CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL, a carnival, a festival, a party. By any name, the seventh annual Festival International de Jazz de Montréal adds up to the largest and most diversified assemblage of jazz or jazz-related talent ever distributed around one city.

There were about one thousand musicians during the ten days, offering as many as 25 concerts daily, half of them indoors at various theatres or clubs, the others were free concerts held on sidewalk stages in several of the streets that were blocked to vehicular traffic.

I arrived on the second day, just in time to hear Clarinet Summit. Although this quartet made an LP two years ago, it has rarely been seen in person. Since John Carter lives in Los Angeles, Jimmy Hamilton (a 26-year veteran of the old Duke Ellington orchestra) in St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, Alvin Batiste in New Orleans, and David Murray (who played bass clarinet) in New York, it took some effort to bring them all together. The result, with its

unorthodox mixture of mainstream and avant garde, daring off unpredictably from abstractions to quotes from "Honeysuckle Rose", was almost a clarinet counterpart to the World Saxophone Quartet, though its impact was reduced by Murray's use of old-fashioned slap-tongue effects.

The next day the highlight was the Paris Reunion Band, on the last night of its two-week American tour. The nine black Americans, who at one time or another had all been American expatriates, played neo-bop themes, with soprano saxophonist Nathan Davis and trombonist Slide Hampton contributing the compositions as well as some of the best solos. I was very taken also with the work of Benny Bailey, who shared the trumpet work with Woody Shaw. The rhythm section, with Kenny Drew, Jimmy Woode and Idris Muhammad, provided a relentless undercurrent for such works as "Klook's Thing" (Kenny Clarke conceived the idea of this band, but died before it could be put into effect) and "Jamaica Nights".

Reflecting the extent to which the festival has expanded, some of this year's concerts took place in a large pavilion at the Place des Arts. A number of them were borderline pop/jazz affairs. Antonio Carlos Jobim, the French singer Veronique Sanson, and a disappointing performance by Michel Legrand in a programme

DON CHERRY AND BABY FIRSTBORN



IAN CARR AND EBERHARD WEBER

of his compositions, dominated by a very large Canadian singer with a voice to match, Ginette Reno.

Closer to the essence of the festival was a unique evening with Milton Nascimento. The composer/singer/guitarist had his own group with him: Ricardo Silveira, guitar, Nico Assumpção, bass, Luiz de Avellar, clavichord, Robertinho da Silva, drums and percussion. However, this was like no other Nascimento concert. Less than half an hour into the show, he brought on Wayne Shorter, on whose *Native Dancer* album, more than a decade ago, Nascimento was first heard by American audiences. Playing both tenor and soprano saxophones, Shorter redoubled the energy and excitement and the soul-rock-bossa groove during his three tunes.

After intermission Nascimento introduced the guitarist Pat Metheny, who, as one observer told me, "is like a God in this city." Metheny, who has yet to miss a Montreal festival, added his vivid, throbbing presence to a samba and a ballad. Not long afterward, Herbie Hancock, hot and ready after a concert with his own quarter a mile away, merged with spellbinding control into this unconventional context, with a pair of electric keyboard solos that blended all the elements: Brazilian, jazz, West Indian, African and rock. The audience exploded into an ovation so uproarious that both Hancock and Metheny returned for an encore, during which the entire jubilant crowd remained standing and swaying.

Because of the Nascimento con-

cert I had to miss Jay McShann's contribution to the "Pianissimo" series held every evening at the Bibliothèque Nationale. However, I did get to hear most of the Gerry Mulligan show, for which he led a well integrated quartet: Bill Mays, piano, Burt Miles, drums; and Michael Formanik, bass. Mulligan's blithe soprano, his bold baritone and even his vocal on "I Never Was A Young Man" were consistently delightful in a programme comprising his own compositions.

It was an interesting contrast, the following evening, to hear another baritone giant, Pepper Adams, in the same hall. Pepper's brave two-year battle with cancer has been widely publicised here in the French-language press, but it wasn't mere sympathy that earned him his overwhelming reception. The set, which included Thad Jones' waltz "Quiet Lady", a little-known Harry Carney piece called "Chalumeau", and Pepper's own "Ephemera", was consistently creative. His sound on the horn, like his speaking voice in the witty announcements, was as strong as ever.

The next evening, on a big outside stage across the street from the Place des Arts, I heard UMO, a surprisingly cohesive big band from Finland. Playing Gillespie's "Things To Come" with a precision and conviction that even the old Gillespie orchestra might have envied, the band also revealed some admirable soloists.

From UMO I hastened to the

Bibliothèque, where Rene Urteger's piano was heard in Bud Powell's "Parisian Thoroughfare", a couple of Monk pieces, and George Shearing's "Conception". Urteger, who was prominent in France in the 1950s and 60s, but fell into oblivion after trouble with drinking and drugs, is now back in good shape, playing convincingly in the bop tradition.

The audiences at Montreal seemed almost uniformly receptive to music of every idiom. Typically, James Brown, with a deafening demonstration of rhythm and blues in its most "showbiz" manner, had the crowd in a frenzy, while his musicians tilted their horns up and down, twisted their bodies back and forth, and a female backup singer moved around more than she sang. There were a few minutes of relative calm and a couple of adequate solos, but Brown himself, hollering at top voice throughout, has a hypnotic appeal that has nothing to do with the niceties of music.

Oregon was somewhat handicapped by the absence of its percussionist Trilok Gurtu, who supposedly had passport problems. However, the group's blend of jazz elements and impressionistic "new age" music moved along smoothly. Lorraine Desmarais, the Montreal pianist who impressed me so much last year, left no doubt that she would soon be internationally accepted. The delicacy and subtlety of her treatment of "A Child Is Born" was like nothing I have heard since Bill Evans. Her crisp articulation and imaginative textures, combined

with the occasional use of power, were among the diverse aspects of her fascinating original composition "Obsession". In a more accessible vein, she brought humorous touches to "Take The A Train", breaking up the notes of the melody in unpredictable ways, and turned parts of her "All The Things You Are" into a fugue.

Obligated to return early to Los Angeles, I had to miss the grand finale, featuring Dizzy Gillespie with the Montreal Tout Etoiles (all stars). I didn't feel too badly about it, because there is no possible way to hear everything that goes on at Montreal.

Leonard Feather

Bracknell Festival BRACKNELL

FRIDAY

APOLOGIES TO CARMEL, Tem Ten etc but the only noteworthy entry on Friday's start to the jamboree was the Charlie Watts Orchestra. An unexpectedly large crowd huddled under a threatening sky but the only cloudburst came from Charlie's Folly itself: this obese, rickety band can muster a terrific row when it's all up and blowing. Problem is, there's so many problems. You start to wonder what a band like this could really do when they dig into some of the makeshift arrangements, given proper rehearsal time and decent sound (both absent tonight). As it is, they are basically too much of a goodish thing.



BILLY JENKINS AS EVIS

L I V E W I R E

Some of the section tear-ups are fun. The tenor assault on "Stromping At The Savoy" displayed tremendous guts from Evan Parker and Bobby Wellins, and the latter had a lovely ballad feature of his own. Crucially, though, the orchestra can't swing! Charlie, John Stevens and Bill Eyden all drum each other out of the way, and there's never any clear focus for the group to blast off with. Julie Dennis and Gail Dorsey get one song each. The bigger the band gets, the smaller everybody's piece of it becomes. Well, a festive beginning! everyone cheered the loud bits.

Richard Cook

S A T U R D A Y

I LOOKED AT MY WATCH. NOON.

Iain Ballamy Quarter or Berkshire Youth Jazz Orchestra? Sorry Berks, but Ballamy's is one of the most interesting small groups around and they showed why here. I think they should find another name since it is emphatically *not* Ballamy plus rhythm section. The rhythmic acuity that marks out Ballamy's playing at its best and most distinctive, complements, as much as it is complemented by the wit, invention and musicality of the others. Django's startlingly effective range of samples, Argueles always stirring and never complacent. Hutton solid and overseeing like a jazz Entwhistle.

Eberhard Weber or Freebop? This version of Stevens' outfit was simply too mouthwatering. Pete King, Evan Parker and Courtney

Pine on reeds alone. And they did not disappoint, Stevens keeping a sure but loose rein on his ebullient solos, exotically and cajoling like Peter Shilton directing his defenders. Particularly excellent were the series of improvised duets which opened several numbers. Evan Parker with Annie Wherehead conjured a fine, prickly intermingling, Pere King and Bobby Bradford taking less risks perhaps, more a ring of runs and responses, but deft and assured, and the most tingling of all, Eddie Parker's flute and Courtney Pine on bass clarinet, beautifully playful, open-eared music justly deserving the massed yodels of appreciation it received.

Nu did disappoint. Not that they weren't good, just that the fusion of *Old And New Dreams* with *Cadence* promised by the line-up did not materialise. While Carlos Ward and Mark Helias filled Redman and Haden's parts ably, Nana Vasconcelos found it hard to say anything about this Ornette-based music. In the 'ethnic' pieces he was fine, backing Don Cherry's scintillant doussin'gouni and performing a remarkable solo on berimbau, but in the group context it was a bit gratuitous. Only a couple of samba-ish numbers showed any attempt to knit the musics together. Nana's cowbell and conga baracuda drew a kind of coyness from Blackwell as if he wasn't quite sure what to play, but they seemed to enjoy working it out and Cherry's lamenting calls were a delight.

9.30. Hardest choice of the weekend: Loose Tubes, Kabon-

do Stylo or Fred Baker? Since I'd heard so much (including the excellent album) but hadn't, as yet, seen them it had to be the Tools. Who were good, yes. Amusing, lively, lots of hard blowing and sly antics, but making the obvious comparison with the previous night's Charlie Watts' Orchestra, they lacked that extra spark. Down to the relative homogeneity of their collective style and the inclination they induce to look for, rather than listen to, what's happening next.

A final word for two of the more endearingly idiosyncratic bands on show. Melody Four—Lo! Coxhill, Seve Beresford and Tony Coe—a cross between free jazz, cabaret and sheer old-fashioned entertainment. Making standards like "Change Partners" unforgettably their own. Where else could Tony Coe finally do "Pink Panther" live? And, late night, Billy Jenkins' Voice of God III. An in-patient encounter group. Jenkins up and down like a manic wind-up doll, Slater on bass trombone and bass drum, Pritchard leaping up at Jenkins' exhortation to fire through a solo and Dodd's calm and attentive at the traps, their therapist. When they played the slightly more sedate "Dead-nought Seaman's Mission" the release from no longer being caught up in that buzzing but directed energy was powerful in itself. Brilliant!

My watch looked at me. I'd run out of words.

Steve Lewis



CHARLIE WATTS



ANNIE WHEREHEAD AMIDST CHARLIE'S DRUMS



JOHNNY DYANI

SUNDAY

ON A MUCH warmer day, brows were mopped to the early accompaniment of *Forward Motion*. Tommy Smith's quartet are as capable as their material is unremarkable: none of these tunes sounded like anything I'd want to hear again, and though Smith's tenor is being honed into an instrument of great dramatic purpose he hasn't yet copped the charisma to transform it. A strong start all the same. Bobby Bradford made his second appearance with a wayward band: Johns Dyan and Stevens are the wrong rhythm team for the trumpeter, and tenorist Frode Gjerstad does nothing sensational. Bradford nevertheless worked patiently at his horn, and if he didn't muster some of the angry fire remembered from the *Love's Dream* session this was still powerful.

Our own Tim Colwell turned in a beautiful little set in the Cellar Bar. He might be the worst dresser on the scene but the man plays full-blooded romantic also that's hard to argue with. "I'll Close My Eyes" was a ballad treatment that equalled anything I heard in the weekend. Less sanguine were the directionless *Third Kind Of Blue*. Ronnie Burrage performs the considerable feat of singing and playing drums and keyboards simultaneously but after that there's not much to mark down as interesting. John Purcell is a gritty reedman who seems to call out for the kind of open-ended structures that Rollins explores in a two setting, not this staccato shortcake.

I caught bites and pieces of the Wilde Theatre's sequence of combinations of Tony Oxley, John Taylor, Tony Coe, Ali Haurand

and Ernst-Ludwig Petrowsky. Most extraordinary moment was the sight of mild-mannered John Taylor, he of the silken keyboard touch, whipped into something approaching a frenzy by the monstrosous clatter of Tony Oxley. The drummer is a bizarre vision: he hardly seems to move, perched awkwardly on a stool that looks far too high, yet he manages to approximate the sound of 20 dustbins falling down a flight of stone steps with no apparent effort. Brainy entertainment.

After some chattering bars of Maggie Nicols and Pere Nu we tolled home to the distant prattle of Randy Brecker, a cold finale. There was always something in the weekend that made you glad you were there: I still don't like outdoor festivals, but they're growing on me.

Richard Cook

Nice Festival NICE

THE TRIBES GATHER. They are still not extinct. There are in fact new tribes. They gather around what remains of honest music, not directed by bottom lines. "The bottom line" is the great American statement. Nothing else counts. Profit and/or loss. Not culture, sentiment or compassion—money. What does it matter how it was spent or arrived? Seal it, kill yourself for it. Just get it.

There are many tribes of many names. They have their abhorrence of bottom lines in common. That's why Courtney Pine sounded so good with Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker. No bottom line there. How about that for a mixed-generation

trio? Birelli Lagrene was with them in the background somewhere but, talking to him, it became obvious that the bottom line does count for Birelli, and he sounded very uncomfortable with this bluesy post-Coltranean modality.

A festival is a destination, the end of the road, a place to relish for a while. In this particular case we arrive on the heights of the city of Nice, the Gallo-Roman Cimiez Gardens, spotted with ruins of ancient tribes, where we find poets literally too numerous to mention playing on three handstands simultaneously.

175 musicians—shy John Lewis hugging those he cares for, Oliver Jackson smiling whether he knows it or not, Miles Davis playing his crippled ass off three nights straight, Astor Piazzolla the new tango chieftain raising goose pimples in a duet with Gary Burton, Jack Bruce subbing for an ailing Percy Heath first and asking whether he was going to get paid for it later . . .

At the same time other such tribes were gathering in Por, Finland, Molde, Norway, The Hague, Holland, Montreux,

Switzerland, Antibes and just down the road in Avignon and Nîmes and in fact on just about any wide spot in any European road whatsoever. It's impossible to check into an airport in July without crossing some improvisers with their axes. How has this come to pass?

Assume you're the mayor of a town with good weather, a beach, a dog track and a casino. Full beaches are nice but not with people swimming in their underwear. You'd like up-market adults at the casino, but preferably a minimum of professional gamblers. Certainly avoid Gypsies and dopers. Families are the answer. Each one requires two hotel rooms. But why should they choose your town and not the next one down the corniche?

Jazz has a combination of intellectual and physical elements that appeals to a cross-section of classes, nationalities and age groups. A sunburn is not a sign of an empty mind at a jazz festival.

In Nice, we are fortunate to find George Wein, the man who invented them. Before starting the Newport festival in the 50s, Wein owned a club in Boston, and



KAHONDO STYLE

L I V E W I R E

before that he was a piano player. He has now become so successful in the festival business that he has recently been able to afford to play jazz piano again. Wein has proved that the best way for an old piano player to find work on the festival circuit is to run a festival.

"Playing clears my head," he said: "No matter how tired I get dealing with business, playing jazz always relaxes me."

Wein had plenty to relax from. The truck carrying Miles Davis's equipment from Italy by way of the Northsea Festival in The Hague had not arrived on time. Davis had to be postponed. The Northsea Festival is the third largest tourist attraction in Holland and yet it can be considered something of a satellite of the Nice festival since Wein sells the Dutch a good number of their acts.

This has become a multi-national multi-million-dollar business - Wein produces 25 festivals a year worldwide. But there is also a charming kind of mom-and-pop flavour to it, in the form, for example, of the innocent optimism of scheduling an Italian registered truck with Italian drivers to carry a load of complex electronic equipment that had to be cleared through at least one border to get from Holland to Nice in less than 20 hours on the July 14th weekend.

It helps to play the blues in that sort of situation. Davis was postponed, outraged customers were appeased but not by Wein. Wein was playing piano with his sextet in Moerabau. "Some jazz fans in this town wanted to put on a festival," he said: "and the city gave them a little money and let them use the town square. And you know there are literally hundreds of festivals around the

world. I felt a little proud of what I've done. None of this existed before Newport.

"Jazz festivals are an outgrowth from the explosion of rock festivals. And it's ironic - jazz has benefited tremendously from the music that nearly destroyed it. Nobody wants a rock festival now. 'Come on, let's get some red beans and rice.'"

Mike Zwerin

Keith Jarrett Trio Wayne Shorter Quartet

LONDON ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

ON PAPER the JVC/Capitol Jazz Parade had looked dull and unimaginative, and on the whole it fulfilled that promise. Yet the Hall was packed every night and the audiences were enthusiastic. What can we learn from this?

On the first night Otis Rush and John Mayall had shown that a simple formula can still inspire stimulating music-making.

DAVID SANBORN at Montreux: R D COOK missed his plane but we did get this exclusive picture of the altman guesting with MILES DAVIS. Violinist FERNANDO SUAREZ is a part of ASTOR PIAZZOLLA's band, the hit of Montreux -

they tour here at the beginning of next year.

Thursday's concert had Stanley Jordan illustrating that if an audience is bent on congratulating itself for being hip enough to recognise simple ideas played the hard way no amount of prettily-packaged predictability will discourage it. Jordan's music is as pleasant as he seems to be personally, but on this showing it did not merit the incontinent acclaim it received from a full house. Yet, in contrast, in May Last Exit had played to less than 200 people. What can we learn from this?

The supposed climax of the week was the set by the Wayne Shorter Quartet. I'll say this for it: it was loud. Loud enough to cover the noise of people leaving in droves. I recall an entertaining version of "Footprints" but the rest of the numbers merged into a grey mass, with the rhythm section coming on like a series of exercises from the "Teach Yourself Funk" book. Once or twice I contemplated walking out myself, but decided that the music did not warrant such a positive gesture. So I watched an undoubtedly talented saxophonist sell himself short, and hoped (in vain) that I might learn something from this.

Thank God (or George Wein?) for Jarrett. Apart from a flowing version of "Billie's Bounce" the Trio was well into its standard ballads bag. There were ravishing versions of "Someday My Prince

Will Come", "When I Fall In Love", "Easy To Remember", "The Song Is You" and a whole parcel of Your 100 Best Changes. I first saw Jarrett (and de Johnette) at the London debut of the Charles Lloyd Quartet. The music and clothes are less outlandish now, but the vocalising and connotations are more bizarre. One might almost believe that sound was generated from a piano by humming into its innards, and if I were *Wire*'s caption writer I'd head this review "Calisthenics at the Keyboard". The playing was sharp, clear and ingenious though, with a number of introductions of *Garnesque* impudence, apparently unrelated ostinato-like figures over which the familiar tunes were suddenly slotted.

Gary Peacock was superb. While Jarrett unfolded the narrative the bassist would butt in with colourful anecdotes which told us more about the background to the events and characters. De Johnette's playing these days is less intrusive but equally intriguing. His approach to the beat remains oblique, but not as tenuous as that of the person in the row behind me who inaudibly and noisily taptoed on the parquet with as much sense of rhythm as Victoria Glick. He seemed to enjoy de Johnette's solos and I can only hope he learned something from these

Barry Witherden





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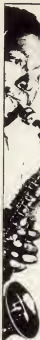
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GETS HUNGARY

LEAVE THE GARE DE L'EST IN A Wagons Lits car with the German in the berth under me farting, then down the Danube from Vienna in a hydrofoil loaded with loaded Austrians, up in a hotel room me myself and I and a crumpled piece of cross-section paper with scribbled names and addresses. Sink or synch in Budapest.

The streets on the Pest side of the river are straight and clogged and very soiled from cheap diesel oil. Pegé in the State Concert Bureau in hot, withering Pest looks like a bass with no peg. "Who is the best bass player in the world?"

"Me." Aladar Pegé has no need to pluck courage. "I am the best."

Buda is hilly with a Hilton Hotel on a plateau. Gyula Babos in the hills of Buda like a buddha once went on television and said: "I'm half Gypsy, I'm half Jewish, I'm a jazz guitar player and I'm . . . still . . . alive."

For 15 years, Babos told himself, "If only you could play like an American." Then he listened to a record he made in 1980 and he thought, "Babos, you sound like an American." By that time nobody wanted to sound like an American any more. Here they sang rock in Hungarian and wanted to sound British. Babos was fed up.

The jam sessions which Babos runs with Tony Lakatos and other travellers every Monday night in the youth club on the 10th floor of the eastern railroad station – departure and arrival at soundments floating in through the window – are like bebop "A" trains . . . a little noisy and old-fashioned but they can get you uptown. On my Monday the "A" train had only 35 passengers.

BEBOP MONDAY NIGHTS DON'T PAY goulash, Babos plays casuals, backs up singers on ham-sandwich tours for soft currencies and teaches in the Jazz Academy of the Bela Bartók Conservatory, founded in 1965 by Janos Gonda, who is also fed up.

Friedrich Karoly teaches ear training in Gonda's Jazz Academy. He plays trombone and sometimes fills in on bass with the trio backing his wife Kati who sings six nights a week in the club which bears her name on a back street in Pest. Every summer, Karoly plays trombone on a small German resort island in the North Sea. He is paid in Deutschmarks, hard currency but no soft touch – operates from 11 am to 10 pm with an hour or two off here and there, no time to do anything else, as if there was something else to do. It's cold and either raining or going to rain. "The Germans think this is healthy weather": Karoly is fed up too.

Janos Masik never heard of String: "Who? Stink?" Masik plays synthesiser with "Europe Edition", underground rock. The leader says: "We sing about our lives in Eastern Europe. This is a new style of communication, sung poetry" – as though Bob Dylan never existed.

Masik graduated from the Jazz Academy with honours and was once one of the best composers in the country. "He's a prototype," director Gonda said.

"What else did he say?" Masik wanted to know.

"He said you're decadent: 'Nothing is important to Masik. There is no aim, no energy to fight for anything. Today he plays jazz, tomorrow rock. This is the young today. They live from day to day. They are fed up. Nothing is worth fighting for. So they do nothing.'"

"That's what I thought he'd say," said Masik.

"My generation is different," Gonda went on: "I lose myself in my work. But you know? For the first time I am thinking about stopping. I feel – how do you say it? – dispersed. It's too much. Perhaps I must change my perspective. Work less hard. I am feeling very sensitive to the bad atmosphere among my pupils. You can feel it at concerts. I'm tired of jazz jazz jazz."

Gonda writes concertos, publishes theory and philosophy books, directs workshops and he has been spending a lot of time "putting programmes into focus". He looked at his watch: "Now you must excuse me, I have an appointment with my cardiologist."



TUD RIVAL HUNGARIAN OPERA HOUSE



THE SWINGING GENERATION DEMANDS A TEACHER, BASSIST, SAXWOMAN,
ORGANISER, SINGER AND BANDEADER. HERE SHE IS



GAIL THOMPSON

Maybe it's her

WORDS: CATH CARROLL

PHOTOGRAPHY: DEREK RIDGERS

* "Ostentatious. I do not want to be doing when I'm 45 is sitting in the Bulls Head in Barnes doing three sets a night for £15... much as I love to play."

Crusading saxwoman Gail Thompson has roughly 20 years to work at avoiding that fate. This athletic bundle of optimism is putting more than her money where her (formidable) mouth is in campaigning for a rejuvenation of the jazz arena – she's giving time and energy. As well as leading her band Gail Force into a future of *rosy* accessibility, she teaches young musicians, has opened up a shop full of the tools of her trade and well shortly be extending this to include a music school.

"What I think is wrong with jazz in this country is that many of the musicians have no interest in their public. They turn up for gigs paying no heed to presentation, probably wearing a dirty old t-shirt. They just stand there, they don't acknowledge the audience, play two numbers lasting half an hour then they shuffle up to the microphone. With a punt in one hand and a fag in the other they go *blablablablab*. Not ONCE do they talk to the audience. Americans, they have smiles, splitting their faces in two, they love it. They get a patter going and they let the audience know what's going on. That way, the audience respond. You have to give if you want to receive. The youngsters now know that you have to make a show of it. It's no longer that *the world owes me a living* attitude."

"The only person who's got it right is Tommy Chase. Most of the older musicians refuse to move with the times. They think they're owed a living because they locked themselves away for twenty years and practised. So what? It was their own choice. People who say to get into a venue *are on* of entertainment."

"I don't go to gigs and just stand there. I shout at the audience, I do anything. Even if it's a dull gig musically, if the audience feel part of what's going on and don't feel any less than the person up there on the stage, they enjoy it. We do play commercial stuff but we keep to our jazz roots."

"You see, there's so many aspects of jazz and people keep wanting to put it into little boxes. Somebody said to me the other day that Slim

Gaillard didn't play jazz. They said it was 'blues'n'b'. I said, how do you get to classify that? They couldn't explain! It all stems from the same thing, jazz can be anything... it's improvisation really. That's it. Hmm how did I get onto this?"

By talking for ten solid minutes without prompting.

"Well, you must be pretty bored, actually."

Handily.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW Gail and her mob was at a non-jazz, all-female venue. Though they were performing without their drummer (who had the misfortune to be born male), the first notes of their zingy horn-swoogling arrangement of "Straight, No Chaser" had the audience lindy-hopping in the aisles. Gail moved from microphone to microphone, keeping an eye on the audience, dropping out to jig along. Laughing all the time. After she'd introduced the women in her band, the audience noticed she'd omitted to introduce herself. "Who are you?" they yelled in unison.

"I'm your fairy godmother!" she chorled. And indeed she is.

"Er, what shall we do now?" she asked us. Bassist Gail Ann Dorsey launched into a strong-clacking version of a Herbie Hancock number. Ten minutes gone and they had the audience in the palms of their capable hands. Gail has been playing over a period of ten years, although the actual time spent with her instrument amounts to more like five years.

"I gave up in between, I was fed up with what I was doing, I had to get a job to finance what I wanted to do which was to play full-time. I got a job in a music shop... I served my apprenticeship."

"Initially, I was on drums at school but they wouldn't let me play drums and wear a gymslip for obvious reasons! I was brought up by my mum on the classics and I played the clarinet. Mom hated jazz, but I'd never seen a black classical clarinet player and I thought I was wasting my time. I went to Woolworths with my pocket money and bought this record. I didn't know what it was, I put it on the record player and it turned out to be Stan Getz. I heard it and that was it! I took the clarinet back to school and swapped it for a

tenor. My mum went crazy and made me take it back, so I used to sneak it to and from school and practise in the park."

Great! How romantic...

"No, it wasn't really. It was alright in summer, but in winter... One day I just thought, oh, fuck it. I took it home and played it to my mum. She went, oh well! She bought me a tenor. I also used to play trumpet but I gave up on that. Now I sing and play bass when Gail Ann swaps onto guitar."

"We're an entertaining band rather than a hard jazz band. There's a huge jazz revival on at the moment and it *can* get into the charts. It kind of has already with Weller and Sade, although that has more of a Latin feel. What does encourage the jazz feeling is that they use good sax players. Kids are hearing this as a new sound. Kids of my generation got to associate jazz with Acker Bilk, Kenny Ball and Chris Barber..."

Aaaarghhhs, yes indeed!

"... You tend to hear jazz on late night programmes on Radio Two and Four and young people don't listen to those programmes. Now kids are saying, how come we've never heard this before?"

"But it must keep going, keep accessible for it to get into the charts. It mustn't just become flavour of the year and fall into the trap of being really boring and clever. You can bore people quickly."

One of the best things about Gail Force – Gail Ann Dorsey on bass, Louise Ellhor on tenor, Diane McLaughlin on alto, Jean Cunningham on alto and soprano, Dessi from the Holloway Allstars on percussion and the token male of the band Harbens Shri on drums ("He's good – for a man") – is the diverse manifestation of individual images. There's Louise in short leather skirts and fishnet tights, Gail Ann cutting a wry figure with her close-cropped hair and combat shorts while the others opt for various permutations of smart casual wear – not a dirty old t-shirt in sight.

"You could be pretentious and say we'll put everyone in a zoot suit uniform but we like to wear what comes naturally to us."

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MAX HARRISON

Recollections Of The Future

LEONARD ANDERSON, THE SERVICER had often warned the people of the third planet, but on this pass, as he sped towards the sun, he wept dirty tears. This agreeably resonant sentence prefaces the score of JOHN MAXWELL GIDDON'S *Voyager*, to be played by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Jerzy Maksymiuk at the Proms on 6 September. Obviously the reference is to Halley's Comet, and, considering how things have gone downhill since it was last here in 1910, the implication is perhaps that by the time of its next visit the third planet may no longer have any people at all. This thought may be welcomed by those who feel no great enthusiasm for the human race, but meanwhile Giddons offers a pre-concert chat about his piece at 6.15 pm. Will he mention, I wonder, the recent *New Yorker* cartoon in which a very elderly barfly is saying, "Halley's Comet had an egg this time and it did just the same last time, too?"

Many of those who failed completely to sight this celebrated astronomical phenomenon have expressed doubt as to whether it actually made the scene at all, and this is nearer to what might have been the truth than they imagine. Back in 1985 a *Wired* space vehicle on a marine tour of the outer planets encountered a rather low-powered celestial luminary which claimed to be Halley's Comet and asked for asylum. The trouble was that Namara Publications, as might be expected, already own several comets, and there were complex orbital arrangements to be considered. In the end Halley's Comet, if such it was, had to be sent dimly on its way. But *Wired* people have access to the small personal comet, a very fine one with a beautiful iridescent tail, which our editor, Richard Cook, keeps in the bottom drawer of his desk. When I come into the office to concoct these paragraphs I always let it out of its jade and amethyst box. It makes some of the other contributors nervous as it zooms silently among the desks, but I say it needs the exercise.

The remaining work of contemporary interest in this 92nd season at the Albert Hall also has an astronomical aspect. JOHN CASKEN'S *Osno Over Farnie* will be heard from the Scottish National Orchestra conducted by Matthias Bamert on 3 September. Like his choral *To Fields We Do Not Know*, mentioned last month and performed at these concerts on 1 August, this was prompted by Northumbrian landscapes and the poetry of Basil Bunting. *Osno Over Farnie* is concerned with travelling to the unknown, with Orion's search for light and his journey to the stars – all suggested in soaring music clothed in mysterious orchestral colours. Casken, too, gives a pre-concert talk at 6.15 pm.

Averting one's gaze from such horrors as Slim Gaillard (3 September) and George Melly (10 September), it has firmly to be said that less of interest is happening on the South Bank than usual this month. True, the Utashi Ensemble, brandishing *basu*, *shawm* and *shakuhachi*, occupy the Purcell Room on 11 September and have promised to play all manner of good things. Among them are *Koto No Tsubi* by KOZABURO HAHAI, *Chudori* by KENYU YONEMIZAWA, *Shon* by HIGASHI YAMAMOTO, *Shoragiri* by UTSUSHIO NAKASHIMA as well as the familiar *Okubo No Odori* by MICHIO MIYAGI and SHINICHI YU IZU'S *Kyosokusha Dori Ni Bua* often mentioned on this page. A related concert is given at the Purcell Room on 18 September when the soprano Yuriko Sakayama, accompanied by the rinpianist Leon Ogden, sings traditional Japanese folk songs arranged by SUKAGAWA, BEKKI, ITOH, KUSE, IMHI and other well-known Nipponese composers.

Playing a somewhat more, er, central repertoire in the Purcell Room on 19 September is Opus 20, a string ensemble conducted by SOET Strouman which has already given some impressive concerts. This time they offer the orchestral versions of WEINBERG'S *Five Pieces Op. 5*, originally for string quartet, and SCHUBERT'S *Verkloren Nacht*, originally for string sextet. Next comes LISZT'S *Funeral Music*,

composed in memory of Bartok, and this is followed by BARTOK'S own pungent yet scintillating *Divertimento*. The only other South Bank programme that need be mentioned here is in the Queen Elizabeth Hall on 29 September. Titled "Dreams Of A Summer Night", this is by the Purcell Orchestra under Robin Page and includes BORRIS'S *Nightlands*, LISZT'S *Musik for Strings* and the UK premiere of ROSENBERG'S *Reflexion No. 3*.

THOSE WISHING TO AVOID ELIA FREZZERAI in the Festival Hall on 22 September can find a refuge at the British Music Information Centre, where the Hanson Quartet will give a workshop on the problems of writing for the string quartet medium. This is under the auspices of the mighty Society for the Promotion of New Music, works by DAVID COLLINS and ROBIN GOSNALL will be featured, and there will be a discussion led by HIGLI WOOD, himself the composer of fine quartets. The month's other SPNM event is at St John's, Smith Square, on 26 September. This finds Gregory Rose conducting Circle in the London premieres of ROBIN GRANT'S *Dumb Show* and JAMES MACMILLAN'S *Song Of A Just War*, which sets poems by Pablo Neruda and William Soutar. Choice ballads by TROU TIFIN. Regarding their world premieres will be BARRY MILLIS'S *Harp Sketches*, DAVID SEFTON-ANDERSON'S *Song Of The Falcon*, JACK VAN ZANEN'S *El Oro De Los Tigres*, which uses a text by Jorge Luis Borges, and JAVIER ALVAREZ'S *Fragments: Rose*, a setting of an ancient Aetec poem.

The final concert in the present MusICA series is at the Institute of Contemporary Arts on 7 September. This brings together Alan Fernberg (piano), Rolf Schulte (violin) and William Purvis (French horn) to play LIGETI'S remarkable Horn Trio. Instead of coupling this, as usual, with BRAHMS' Op. 40, MusICA commissioned a younger Hungarian composer, LÁSZLÓ VIDOVSKY, to write a piece for the same medium. Also included are Ligeti's brilliant Piano Etudes of 1985, a considerable addition to the repertoire.

JOHN CASKEN'S *To Fields We Do Not Know*, referred to above, is now available from Schott Ltd, and in fact the scores of a number of works mentioned in this column during recent months have lately turned up. They seem dreadfully expensive, though few will set you back as much as STEVE REICH'S *The Desert Moon*, which costs £30 from Boosey & Hawkes. Two other important items from the same source are ELIOTT CARTER'S *In Sleep*, in *Thunder* and *Triple Duo* (both £15). Both of these pieces, incidentally, are now available on Wergo 60124, while *Desert Moon* is on Nonesuch K97910-1. Other Schott scores that ought to be noted are ANTHONY GILBERT'S *Towards Ascent*, ALEXANDER GOHR'S *Manual Offering* and Concert for Eleven, STEVE MARTLAND'S *Amorosa Invenio*, GEORGE NICHOLSON'S *Convergences Of The Tundra* and MARK ANTHONY TURNAGE'S *On All Fours*.

It is good, also, to see that Faber Music continue to push out pieces by the youthful GEORGE BENJAMIN, the most recent arrivals being scores of *At First Light* and *Ringed By The Flat Horizon*. Further recordings that should be mentioned include LISZT'S *AWAKEN'S Les Espires Du Sonnet* and Symphony No. 3 on CBS 42203, P. MAXWELL DAVIES'S *Into The Labyrinth* and *Sinfonietta Academica* on Unicorn Kanchana DKP9038 and JOHN BULLER'S *The Theatre Of Memory* and *Pavane* on DKP9045. Coming up closely behind them are BRIAN FERNYHOUGH'S *Pavanello I* and II and YORK HOLLER'S *Arco* (these conducted by Border) on Erazo STUT1556, PETER REIDERS'S *Four Compositions* and HANS ARHAIM-AMEN'S *Walden* and *Unterwacht* on Paula 37. Two interesting tape works, DIND SMAILIN'S *Voces* and JONNY HARRISON'S *Klang*, are on UEA Recordings UFAR1099. Beware, however, that these are coupled with *The Transient Radio Of St Narcissus* by TIM SOUSSE.



Japan's great composer asks to be an anonymous part of the world.

TORU TAKEMITSU

Tokyo go!

WORDS: BRIAN MORTON
PHOTOGRAPHY: CAROLINE FORBES

THE CABRIOLE WANTED TO know where I was going. Not just *where*, you understand, *what for*. To interview someone. "Who's that, then?" Takemitsu, I said, getting slightly rattled in the heat. "Bless you, guy," and roared off belching diesel.

One of these days I'm going to start an interview apologising for my English.

Toru Takemitsu arrives late from lunch with the Japanese ambassador. He's equally hot, looks harassed, and says—more than once—that he wishes his English were better. The syntax cracks now and again on more abstract formulations and there's the odd interrogative repetition of a word. Even so, communication

seems almost absurdly easy. Though face and tiny frame remain immobile, the fingers flick out a constant phrasic semaphoric, a subtext to every word and thought that is instantly comprehensible. And very slightly unsettling.

Beneath it all, too, an unlooked-for sense of humour. These guys are inscrutable, right? The following night, at the Almeida Theatre, his film- and tape-piece *Vocalism At* has them rolling in the aisles, a perilous predicament at the Almeida, earlier, 'in conversation' with Barrie Gavin, he'd described his introduction to Western music: "Otto Klemperer, Bruno Walter and" – half a beat – "Paul Whiteman".

The post-war American occupation of Japan – he was 15 at the time of Hiroshima – brought a few unmixed cultural blessings, and one of them was music, jazz, swing, classical, pumped out of a plethora of forces network stations. The young Takemitsu, recovering from consumption, worked in an American officers' club. "During the war, young people had a very bad time. Anything from the West was forbidden, except some German music. I was so thirsty to listen to Western music and to be a composer like Debussy."

Takemitsu's small group settings, many of them performed during the Almeida Festival, show from one perspective the impact of non-canonical music like jazz and from another the freedom from merely conventional ambitions that is the mark of the self-taught. He works in occasionally startling combinations. *Waves* is for clarinet, French horn, trombones and bass drum, *Rings*, for flute, lute and *teru-guitar*, *Brise*, for flute, two harps, two marimbas and percussion; the recent *Veri L'un-vo-ciel*, *Palma* for guitar, oboe d'amore and orchestra.

This apart, Takemitsu has worked in more conventional settings; the *Cello Concerto* (*Orna And Pleader*), one of a series of works on astronomical themes, belongs instrumentally if not stylistically to a recognisable Western genre. His best known work of all, *November Steps* I from the 1960s, is scored for *hina* (lute) and *shakuhachi* (wood flute) soloists, along with orchestra, and represents the fullest synthesis of Eastern and Western procedures.

WE'RE ON THE EDGE here of a Big Question. Are there fundamental – or only historical and cultural – differences between East and West, given that Takemitsu seems to have a stake in

both?

"Western civilisation and Western culture are facing difficulties" – he's telling us – "even so our daily life is just like the West. But we, we also have some traditional cells – cells" – in the mind."

Cells or souls – we have mutual problems with the vowel – I agree, will do very well. There was around here an uneasy sensation of speaking to someone at once very far away and very near at hand, or better, given those hands, communicating through some semi-conducting conceptual barrier. "I use a conventional orchestra and Western instruments but our sense of space and time is different from yours." Too true.

Internationalism, he believes, is an inevitable development. It was Takemitsu who fostered Stockhausen's epochal visit to the Tokyo Expo, with all that implied for a 'world-music'. None the less, he's no Global Villager. The hands get very expressive. "Nowadays all human beings carry some universal egg we are expecting to hatch. Some of us expect it to hatch too quickly. We have to take time. We have to recognise differences."

The same is true *within* his work. A genius for communication can too often lead into a 'multimedia' broth; Takemitsu has worked in the visual arts, in film and video. Yet these fall securely into place as way-stations on an essentially musical journey.

"When I was young I really wanted to be a painter. When I write music, I get many things – inspiration? – from painting."

This can come from as far afield as American Abstract Expressionism, traditional scroll painting and traditional Japanese gardens (the last a quintessential example of that different conception of space and time).

"Traditional Japanese music is very much related to visual images. My concern with music is to produce colour, sound colour."

This is not the colour-metaphysics of Scriabin or Messiaen; for Takemitsu, there is only one shift of reference. "When I imagine a sound, it comes out like a colour or a figure, not as Nirvana or the Apocalypse."

THE ATTRACTION OF HIM seems largely the attraction of working with others, in contrast to the composer's customary isolation to be absorbed into something larger.

"My dream as a composer is to be an anonymous part of the world. In the old days, maybe, in the classical or romantic period, the composer wanted to push – emphasise – one thing. I don't want to push. A composer must first be a listener." For ample proof of the wisdom of that, there is the stunning piano piece *Uninterrupted Rest*, an example of a work almost listening to itself.

For contrast of the harshest kind, there are the scores of the heavily erotic *Woman Of The Dunes* and for Kurosawa's *Leash-and-Mat* (both epics *Ran*, two movies now almost inconceivable without Takemitsu's music. Making *Ran* was not without its frustrations.

"Kurosawa had very strong musical ideas – *idiot fixer*? He loves music but his musical knowledge is very limited. It took a long time. He didn't like it. I didn't like it. It was always . . . compromise! Making *Ran*, he listened all the time to Mahler, to Symphony No 1."

And at that, for the first time, startlingly, a change of expression, a real castor oil glare of disgust. *Ran* with the "Titan" symphony?

Unlikely, but it raises the question of an equally unlikely association: the every way gentle composer and the gore-obsessed movie director. Two paths to a single conclusion. Takemitsu views with gloom the regrowth of militarism in his own country. His friend Mishima's *Seppuku* he sees as a grotesque aestheticism dressed up in corrupt politics. (Perhaps the horror at Kurosawa's love of Mahler stems from a vague memory of those days when only German music, martial, expressionistic, nationalistic, blared over from the West.) Nakasone's neo-nationalism seems a sure route to the dusty ruin prophesied in *Ran*. Takemitsu avoids historical or political reference in his work but behind everything he writes is the clustered memory of fanaticism and nuclear wastage.

He heads off for a last rehearsal with the London Sinfonietta and I turn to gather up my gear from the window sill. Across the yard a young Oriental waiter steps out a back door for a well-earned smoke, tie loose, at peace. Suddenly his eyes bulge in a perfect mime of horror at the half-dozen grey shadows nudging at the bin bags. A second later, he's got a broom handle in his hands, delivering cuddling kendo strokes in all directions as the rats whip back into the brickwork. Sobering, and somehow an appropriate moment to depart.





HERBIE HANCOCK

Rocket and see

Or play straight-ahead jazz. Or eat a cream pastry. All in a day's workplay for this big cat of the keyboard.

WORDS: NICK COLEMAN PHOTOS: PETER ANDERSON

HERBIE HANCOCK'S ROOM in the most regal hotel in Knightsbridge is powder blue and swagged. It has a vast bed with an overhanging canopy – half-way between a medieval throne and a sawn-off four-poster ("Great bed," smirks Herbie, like Richard Pryor doing a white boy). There are three French windows (triple-glazed) which open out onto a balcony from which huge flags hang down to the porter's trolley out in the street below. Herbie is being photographed, pulling faces, posing against the bright emblematic colours, demanding which is the way to Harrods, which he pronounces as if he were going to catch fish with it.

He's doing a regal wave. An open-topped tourist bus is passing below us and a young girl is waving excitedly at him, taking photographs. Herbie smiles, acknowledges the attention and turns back towards the windows from which we'd emerged. The girl can clearly be seen to turn to her companion and demand perplexedly, "Who is that?"

And a little later, gripped lightly between delicate, almost child-like fingers, a cream pastry is breaching its last. Already the lopsided chasm that is Hancock's mouth has claimed the luscious purple loganberry that sat on top, and now the famous tonsils are looming to devour what remains. Squelch.



"If I'm told I can't do

something . . . I'm gonna do it"

"Oooh, aah! Hmmm! Yes that's good. Hmmm. Have some wine."

He splashes a couple of inches of dark red into his tooth-mug and presents me with it.

"I bought this in Nice airport. Chateau (something indecipherable) '79. It's ve-e-ery good."

The price ticker is still on the bottle. It says 190F. I raise the tooth-mug to my lips and make a silent toast to Style.

SO WHAT DO WE KNOW about Herbie Hancock?

We know that he was born in Chicago in 1940 and that by the age of eleven he had played with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Boy wonder. Good mythic stuff.

We also know that on graduating from college in 1960 with an Honours degree in music (a transfer from engineering), he appeared as a dep in New York at the behest of Donald Byrd. Another two years, and he was leading his first recording date for Blue Note (*Takin' Off*) and had a hit single ("Watermelon Man"). Sessions piled up and then the big beckon came from Miles Davis.

"Other musicians suggested it. I don't think Miles was all that impressed with my playing. He asked Jackie McLean and Hank Mobley what they thought and they said, 'Hire him! Miles said to Jackie, shit man, he can't play. So Jackie said: look, you asked me, so I'm telling you. Typical Jackie.'"

The air-conditioning in the room hums. At least I hope it's the air-conditioning. Littering almost every surface like a plague of cockroaches are Hancock's little black bits of technology: a tape recorder, a portable CD player, cameras, portable keyboards. He pokes and prods at Peter Anderson's camera and asks gobbledegook questions about lenses and magic numbers. He even gets intrigued by why the drinks cabinet won't open. He takes machines, how they work, why they work, "patterns and things." Bespectacled, toothy and studious-looking, he is self-confessedly "analytical."

Investigative? I suggest, aiming to drive a subtle wedge down the cleft in his career. "Uh? I guess so," he nods amicably, eyeing another cream bun. He's not going to be drawn so

easily onto the prongs of what must now be to him the most boring question in the world: why did he go all electric, funky and (ohmygod!) commercial in the 70s when he had a perfectly respectable career going as a Real Musician?

"Look. I've never left jazz. I've never left dance music. I used to be into R&B and classical long before I knew what jazz was . . ."

Herbie, Herbie, I like your dance records. I see them as different strands of the same tradition.

"Well, yes. All pop music stems from black music. The church, gospel music, the blues. But you know all that stuff. My *opinion* is that though pop may have been born in the black American experience, that experience speaks about and for the whole of humanity. That's why rock & roll was able to develop. It's not just about black people; it's about *human* conflict, *human* relationships, things we all experience."

"Acoustic jazz is certainly more, uh, intellectual, more harmonically and rhythmically complex and highly emotional. The difference is simply that jazz makes use of a broader range of musical tools — from the simple to the complex. The pop thing has fewer tools at its disposal. It doesn't need them. It's about *eliding*. Being concise. Saying concise things. Shit. I like making pop records."

Herbie the Boffin is fast-cut on video between leggy automata, bodersuited, surrounded by blinking lights and synthesizers, one of those little microphones perpetually hanging from his ear like an inquisitive asp. He's having fun. Smiling and tinkering.

He tells me how he likes to defy his own norms. He likes Bill Laswell for that reason.

"Bill produced Bootsy Collins and then went and did Motorhead. He does that kind of thing simply because it is ridiculous. I'm like that too. If I'm told I can't do something . . . I'm gonna do it."

Herbie the Urbane is at the Royal Festival Hall with an acoustic jazz quartet posed, elegant, concert-hall-slick. Chat about England's humid heat, air-conditioning and Californian swimming pools precedes his act. A regal wave from the wrist concludes it. Cheery.

More than a survivor of the jazz necropolis,

H. Hancock is a style leader in the new jazz *palatise*, well-mannered and silk-suited. The jazz he plays with Ron Carter, Al Foster and Branford Marsalis is similarly well-groomed, discreetly sucking up classical strands from bop's leftovers like spaghetti. A little untawelling of history, perhaps?

The lineage is certainly traceable back from this Concert Hall Jazz with its broad gestures and stagey sophistication. Back through the pianist's own VSOP Quint/Quartets of recent times, back through his slightly arch, non-electric recordings of the later 60s, back all the way to the humming widescreen turbulence of the Second Great Miles Davis Quintet.

That group had scale. It had space. The musical relationships in that group were *dramatic*, heightened by the confident clash, ebb and flow of five unruly musical personalities into the kind of narrative existence beloved of the dramaturge. That Miles group learned how to be an event.

Herbie remembers how even before Shutter joined, little dramas would change the music.

"Tony Williams and I used to play one way behind Miles and a different way behind George Coleman. Behind Miles, I played what I thought would be comfortable for him sensitive, like Bill Evans or Wynton Kelly. Tony would do the same thing, only thinking of Jimmy Cobb or Philly Joe Jones. And then when George Coleman played we'd really open up and play all this wild stuff, *stee-e-etching* out." Hancock's arms describe parabolas in the air.

"Then one day in Detroit Miles says, 'why don't you play behind me like you play behind George?'" He pauses and grins, he likes a good yarn, does Herbie, especially when he can take off the hippest man who ever lived.

"Well, I looked at Tony. Is he *serious*? He wants us to play like that behind him?" So we said o-o-okay and opened up. *ba-lala-lalalaaa!* And Miles starts bobbing and weaving, really struggling. And the second day we continue this barrage and Miles is still ducking around, struggling, trying to find out what the hell he's supposed to do with this stuff.

"But by the third day, of course, not only did Miles have it, but I was the one struggling. Miles was *dealing*. Right after that he

said: "I don't wanna play no more chords!"

WHATEVER HERBIE SAYS, I reckon Miles' famous car had caught a thing or two in the pianist's playing. Hancock has that weird facility for heightening musical language in a dramatic way, without speechifying and without compromising the music's heart. He seems to adjust, like a great actor, to the requirements of not only a new stage but also a new text, as at ease with blank verse as he is with TV soap macro-speak. Making proper dramatic sense of both.

The *Aladdin Voyage* album – an impressionistic, semi-programmatic exploration of emotions evoked by the sea (see what I mean?) – is jazz heightened by what amounts to a literary input of ideas. "Watermelon Man" and the splendid grooves he helped propel for Lee Morgan, among others, are exercises in heightened jazz colloquy.

The secret, he insists, comes from hard listening and being prepared to push onwards from what's heard – from being prepared to take risks. He names his three favourite tenor saxophonists for just those reasons: Michael Brecker, Branford Marsalis and "the master of the saxophone" Wayne Shorter.

"I love their sound, but most of all I love their care and concern to be truthful in every situation, their preparedness to expose themselves – like a flasher."

He laughs. Herbie the Wide Boy is never far from the surface.

"No, seriously. . . . There's a real strength in that. They play on the edge, like walking on a tightrope. They play everything at the last possible moment, holding out 'til it's almost too late to play a note. . . . and then they play that last thing. That takes the most courage a musician can muster up – to trust themselves to that last moment."

The reason why that characteristic is so important is that it shows vulnerability. Vulnerability cuts through the protective barrier that we all have and, in the case of music, the person listening feels something very deeply on an emotional level. That listener then cares about the musician who's showing vulnerability because . . . because . . .

Because they can identify their own feelings

of vulnerability with what's being said by the musician?

"Right. Right. That's it exactly!"

Herbie slides off the squashy lip of his chair and ends up squatting animatedly on his haunches, all traces of urbanity and studious solemnity subverted by a huge grin and his undignified position. I'm talking to an immensely likeable, almost puckish individual who loves tinkering around with ideas.

I suggest that Branford might possibly be intimidated by the company he keeps. I'd had a feeling the night before in the RFH that his tentativeness ("Vulnerability!" roars Herbie) was a sign of inhibition.

"Uh-uh! Not at all. Branford's fine, he was just a little tired. If anyone's a little frightened, Al Foster is. His idol is Tony Williams and nobody's ever played drums with this configuration except Tony. So when Al hears me and he hears Ron. . . . he hears Tony. He's only now beginning to find his own identity with this group. We're all only beginning to find our identity."

Perhaps there are five identities that need to be found with this group: yours, Ron's, Al's, Branford's and the collective one.

"Exactly. The collective thing develops the individual conception. That's what happened in '65 with Miles and ESP. That was the first record made by that group after Miles said he didn't want to play chords any more. That was the first record of a band that had begun to develop its collective sound."

COLLECTIVITY USED TO BE a word you could imagine being easily associated with jazz's social framework. The idea of a sealed environment in which cars grooved in tandem and in opposition – but collectively – remains an attractive one, the key to jazz's nostalgic toy-cupboard, a seductive story.

Hancock now lives in LA so he has little or no contact with the so-called neo-bop (ugh) scene on the East Coast. He doesn't much like the idea of being an elder statesman ("I feel as young as they are") but he's "glad they're doing what they're doing".

But, I complain, most of the music that's coming out of New York is very arid, studied, almost posed.

"Jam sessions don't exist any more.

They have to learn it all from records."

"That's because jam sessions don't exist any more. They have to learn it all from records. Without the drugs, the ghettoisation and stuff, it's great – we've passed all that – but what you have now is musically second best."

Suddenly his eyebrows shoot up above the rim of his specs like a black rainbow.

"Shit! I just thought of this for the first time: that's the way Europeans learned jazz . . . ! And now that's the way Americans learn jazz! Ain't that funny?"

A lot of those new bop-ish records sound as if they could be European – including some of Wynton's.

"Ooooh! Ooooh, man! I'd love to see his face if he heard you say that. Ooooh, that is funny."

We ramble on a bit more about Sound and Identity and what history's done to them. I throw in my favourite alto nose, Jackie McLean, as an example of everything that *isn't* studied.

"He's a genius, man. You know that tune 'Little Melonae'? How could anyone have written a tune like that at that time, in the early 50s?"

He begins to hum it absently, a look of concentrated rapture on his face.

"What a tune! He made that first record with Miles when he was 16 or something – played out of tune, a little sharp, but *hey!* Man, he was hip."

Hip was a dramatisation of the ghetto experience. It had its own private vocabulary and evolved its own social values – almost in mockery of the ludicrous values of the rest of the world.

Jazz was its heightened language, the tragic discourse that made and makes us weep. As the Greek car said, Tragedy enables human life.

I take my leave of Herbie Hancock cordially. He's a very nice bloke, completely unpretentious, eternally optimistic ("I've always been optimistic, I've always had hope") and a lot of fun.

As I cross the Knightsbridge rush-hour, all Range Rovers, ra-ras and Royal Weddings, I resolve again for the umpteenth time not to be so romantic about this music.

By the time I'm home again and playing *Miles Smiles* at blistering volume, I know my vow doesn't stand a chance.

JOHN ZORN

The art of noise

WORDS: DAVID ILIC

PHOTOS: PETER ANDERSON

* SOMETHING JOHN ZORN'S albums are not short of is liner notes. Paragraph after paragraph detail out the varied processes and compositional outlines (Zorn calls them "game rules") which guide the various groups of improvising musicians through their paces, broken up only by a few lines of dedication to Zorn's influences past and present. "Hockey" (all of his early projects were named after sports of one kind or another) is dedicated to the legendary US comedian Jack Benny. Zorn calls him "a master of comic timing . . . whose incredible abilities never got in the way of his art. Perhaps because of his great subtlety he has yet to be fully appreciated or understood."

I'd say the same of John Zorn himself. But what a minute! Isn't this all sounding a little serious? I mean, we're talking here of a man who includes among his instrumental armoury a sizeable collection of bird calls which, like his saxophone mouthpieces and clarinet heads, are often played into bowls of water.

A few years ago I *would* have written him off as a bad joke. The memory of his London debut concert in '81 haunted me long after the event. I hated it! It wasn't the abrupt changes in texture and movement which rattled me as much as Zorn's apparent indecision. He'd never keep to any one instrument for more than a few seconds: a momentary squeal on this clarinet head here; a warble on that crow call there, then chuck the both of them for something else.

But time and, more importantly, Zorn's records have been great healers. *Yankee* (a set of free improvisations with guitarist Derek Bailey and trombonist George Lewis) proved irresistible – a continual flux of sounds and silence, balancing comic gestures with virtuoso playing. Bailey's clipped phrases provide the cornerstone; Lewis is the foil for Zorn, although he's also the more wayward of the two wind players: Zorn meanwhile shows off his impeccable timing, moving between bubble sequences, fast-tongued phrases and hild single reed sounds.

With the first volume of Zorn's *Classic Guide To Strategy*, I was hooked. The two side-long solo improvisations fine-tune the details of Zorn's work to a point where the crazy continuity and abrupt contrasts take on a new-found flow. A much bolder inner structure reveals itself as patterns emerge, disappear, then re-appear in mutant form. Lumina label boss Ned Rothenberg, himself a saxophonist, says of Zorn's solo work: "The duality of technical mastery and a spontaneity of expression which belies it, creates musical events which are both highly organised in time and stand mysteriously apart from it." Evan Parker puts its appeal in simpler terms: "Zorn offers us a new vision of reed music, it demands our attention."

The second volume of *Strategy* (just out) marks a new development in Zorn's solo music. This time it's busier still. There's extensive overdubbing, so the contrasts come thick and fast. Zorn still has an obvious liking for framing sounds with silence; it's just here they're not so heavy-hung.

Zorn has been promising an album of entirely solo playing ever since his first recordings for Parachute in the late 70s, [all of which were group performances]. The first appeared only in '83, whether *The Classic Guide To Strategy* follows the lead of Musashi's *Book Of Free Rings* which inspired the title in becoming a five-part series is purely down to events.

HIS ONE SOLO APPEARANCE apart, he's played only rarely in Britain, every time as the guest of guitarist Derek Bailey. Twice he toured with Company, Bailey's international improvising pool. This year he featured on the Incus Festival: a duo with Bailey, and in a re-run of the brilliant *Yankee* trio with Lewis. Like Bailey, he's a feeling, distinctive and very powerful free improviser. Unlike him, Zorn has also kept one foot in composition. Was there ever a period in which he stopped writing?

"Not really . . . I started out doing it as a kid, age 14. It's gone through different stages, sure, but I can't ever remember having stopped. Actually, I'm at the point now where I want to stop performing and just compose and work in the studio.

"I've never really seen myself as a performer. I mean, what are they? The really good performers are people who can sell whatever they've got to many, many people. Part of the bag is the way you dress, your fashion; the way you act on stage, the way you photograph . . . those to me are important elements, and I'm not good at those things. The camera hates me."

I look stupid on stage with a bunch of duck calls . . . the whole thing is ridiculous! I'm only doing it because I've got a compositional idea in my head and this was the only way to get it out. Now I find it's easier to do that in a recording studio where I have total control over what's going on . . . Like on the Godard piece. I'm able to use improvisers who are good performers, who have their own personal language that's normally un-notable . . . you can't even do a graphic for them. I'm there as the sculptor, kind of moulding the sounds."

Zorn's tribute to the French film-maker Jean-Luc Godard is an 18-minute *tour de force* comprising around 60 individual sections of music. The sharply contrasting are jammed together in Zorn's inimitable manner. The surprise is the extent to which Zorn and crew play with concrete musical forms: stolen bebop licks, heavy metal guitar chording, swirling sequences from the classical harp repertoire, shot through with elements of pastiche. The majority of Zorn's early recorded compositions like "Lacrosse" (from *Sibou*), "Pool" and the later, magnificent "Archery" dealt with the contrastingly abstract, although if you check the scores, there are few actual staves in sight. So who were Zorn's composing influences?

"Charles Ives was my hero, Stravinsky, Harry Partch and John Cage came later. I went through college in New York studying comp-

CROW CALLS,
MOUTHPIECES,
BUBBLES AND
BEBOP LICKS:

A NEW
MUSIC MASTFR
SETS HIS
GAME RULES
FROM
NEW YORK
TO TOKYO

osition, performing graphics by Cage, Christian Woolf and others, improvising the actual music and then having to call it theirs. I got sick of this in the end and dropped out, went to St Louis and checked out the scene there — what I suppose you could call the jazz mainstream now — and it was there I picked up the sax."

But then what's the difference in his composing for improvisers?

"I don't write and then say 'here, perform this as music'. I write structures, game rules, strategies that the performers can use to get their own sounds going. I never talk about sound with improvisers... my interest isn't in how things sound as much as how things *work*, the relationships involved."

Zorn cites one-time AACM composer and saxophonist Anthony Braxton as another important influence: "I liked the fact he could take a certain structural idea, translate it, and not lose any intensity or energy in the performance of it. Partch was also into combining the two. A lot of contemporary classical music never really did that. Like it was played by spineless worms, people without any balls, with no sense of humour, who never really got down to digging-in to the performance of what they were doing."



Zorn is emphatic: on paper, "Pool", "Hockey", "Larosse", "Anchovy", they're his; on vinyl the music belongs to the performers. Zorn need not actually worry about the sound for his regular contributors are, like him, quite singular voices: keyboard player Wayne Horvitz, violinist Polly Bradfield and guitarist Eugene Chadbourne are long-time associates, newer figures include the guitarist Arto Lindsay, harp player Zeena Parkins and turntable manipulator Christian Marley. Their back-

grounds are many and varied, several of them are culled from New York's downtown rock scene, some of them collaborators in a series of trios Zorn led under the banner "Locus Solus", all of them exploring ways of improvising within the constraints of rock form, its energy and its brevity. Nothing on the double album Zorn released (comprising four unique, very different groupings) touches over three minutes.

If ZORN STANDS TO BE misunderstood, it's for his large scale works like "Pool" and "Archery". These very enormity can be overwhelming: "Archery", written for a 12-string cast, runs to almost 90 minutes, although the score itself is comparatively small. Zorn lavishes on the listener every possible detail of the composition's inner workings: a graphic of the stereo recording layout; an explanation of the various systems by which the musicians can call different sized groupings into play, and a transcription of just how they interpreted Zorn's "game rules". And yet to ascertain any overall shape to the ensemble work requires a distancing which proves almost impossible simply because there's so much going on, and at such a pace. To do it would actually require you playing it to hell (by which time you'll have driven yourself mad, and probably your neighbours). And yet there's no tiring of this music — it presents itself anew on every play.

Not all of Zorn's compositions feature him as instrumentalist, one of four recorded versions of "Hickey" (from "Pool") was done without him, while for his latest project

"Cobra" (another 12 piece with a low-fi extract from their Moers Festival appearance last year already out on the German cassette/tear *Bad Alchemy*), and a double album on state-of-the-recording-art label Hat Art imminent) Zorn chose to prompt rather than play. Some of his compositions he may never actually perform.

Zorn is, in fact, getting deeper into far-Eastern culture. For *The Classic Guide To Strategy* Vol 2 he named the seven pieces after various Japanese actors and musicians, he collaborated with several Japanese musicians on his first visit to the country, and one of them, an improvising duo with Tsuguru shamisen player Michihiro Sato is now on record. Lately, he's taken to living six months of the year in Tokyo (the rest of the time he spends in his native New York).

"I'd always wanted to go there from being a kid, although I wanted to be invited there to work. Meeting those musicians made me aware that the scene is very much alive, maybe an entirely new kind of music is going to be coming out of Japan over the next few years. In a sense it's a very new place; it was closed for 300 years, nothing got in or out of the country; then when it opened up to the West in the early 1900s people went crazy devouring all this new information which was flooding in. Then the war devastated Tokyo — all that was left was rubble, so they totally rebuilt the city. Now it's like there's a very, very new culture being built on a very, very old culture.

A very strange dichotomy. Musicians there are open to trying all different things, like they feel an obligation almost to do that. I really

like it there.

There are waves in New York. It's going through a 'down' period right now. In general New York is still, I think, more exciting than anywhere else except for Tokyo. It's got that same kind of vitality, you sense there's something that could explode at any minute!"

SOME RECORDS

- SCHOOL (Parachute P00 4/6)
 POOL (Parachute P00 11/12)
 ARCHERY (Parachute P00 17/18)
 LOCUS SOLUS (Rift 037)
 THE CLASSIC GUIDE TO STRATEGY Vol 1 (Lantern 004) Vol 2 (Lantern 010)
 w Derek Bailey & George Lewis, YANKIES (OAO/Collab CELL 5006)
 w Eugene Chadbourne, THERE'll BE NO TEARS TONIGHT (Parachute P00 13)
 w Jim Scales, THIS (Lantern 008)
 w Michihiro Sato, GANKEI ISLAND (Yakob 2101)
 w Ned Rothenberg, URBAN (Lantern 011)
 w Charles Noyes, THE WORLD & THE RAW PEOPLE (Zoar 12)
 w The Golden Palominos, THE GARDEN PALOMINOS (OAO/Collab CELL 5002)
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NEW JAZZ VIDEOS REVIEWED BY CHRIS PARKER

WEATHER REPORT: JAPAN DOMINO THEORY (HEN-DRING)

VARIOUS ARTISTS: ONE NIGHT WITH BLUE NOTE PRESERVED VOLUME 2 (PMI)

A CREDIBLE CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN from the obvious contrasts in the presentation of the music here is that the closer to rock a band's music is, the more the promotional-video syndrome sets in, the less enquiring its public is imagined to be.

Certainly, if you want to come away from *JAPAN DOMINO THEORY* with a clearer idea of just how Weather Report produce their sound, you won't be helped by the apparently arbitrary editing: on numerous occasions the camera settles lovingly and lingeringly on a musician to reveal that he's playing totally unremarkable basic accompaniment, while the real action is taking place elsewhere. The sense of Weather Report as a band is also rather obscured by the fact that we don't see all of them at once until the end of their first number, "Do Waltz". In contrast, the Blue Note video never wastes a close-up. The fingers of Kenny Burrell, McCoy

structured: the style of Volume 1 has been followed, each act slowly blossoming into colour and movement from a blue-tinted still with the personnel and tune-title listed discreetly on it. This structure is missing from *JAPAN DOMINO THEORY*. Weather Report are suddenly shown, for a reason I could not fathom, tuning up in the middle of the video – Victor Bailey plays "Star-Spangled Banner", Joe Zawinul messes about on the drums, Wayne Shorter adjusts his reeds.

But to the music: *JAPAN DOMINO THEORY* begins with a dramatic slow-motion cymbal, then the band is revealed one by one. Shorter is looking serious and rather diffident as usual; Zawinul is grimacing under his multi-coloured hat and pointing at everyone to keep things going. This is actually necessary, since the band tends to meander rather aimlessly on this outing – a little percussion discussion here, a small burst of plaintive soprano there – and Wayne Shorter in particular seems a little ill at ease, constantly fiddling with his mike or wiping his hands. We are only sporadically treated to Weather Report in full flight and the result is frustratingly fragmentary, the whole seldom gelling from its parts.

The music on *ONE NIGHT WITH BLUE NOTE PRESERVED*,

while not delivering quite all one might expect from the mouth-watering line-up (McCoy Tyner, Jackie McLean, Cecil McBee, Jack de Johnette, Charles Lloyd, Michel Petrucciani, among others, are all on this cassette in various combinations), is always arresting – with some great moments. Charles Lloyd sway- ing, hypnotic and compelling



CHARLES LLOYD (LEFT) AND YOUNG JOE ZAWINUL

Tyner, Cecil Taylor and Jimmy Smith are all caught at crucial moments – Cecil Taylor's music in particular becomes a great deal more accessible as a result – and there are some genuinely exquisite moments when the precision with which the music has been captured is breathtaking: the camera zooms in on a lovely little delicate slide by Cecil McBee on the earnest ballad "Lady Day", or on a sudden dramatic plash of Jack de Johnette's cymbal. The whole is also very unpretentiously

on "The Blessing", "Tone Poem" and "Lady Day", Lou Donaldson beefing up "Blues Walk"; a solo McCoy Tyner in close-up building his familiar clusters of notes on "Sweet And Lovely"; Cecil Taylor extracting all manner of emotive sound from "Puntos Cantados". Stand-out video musician has to be Jack de Johnette – his constant striving for just the right sound is repeatedly captured during what is a highly satisfying collection, a fitting successor to Volume 1.

GREAT RECORDINGS

JAMES P. JOHNSON ON BLUE NOTE • A REAPPRAISAL

BY MAX HARRISON

ED HALL/JAMES P. JOHNSON/SIDNEY
DEPARIS/VIC. DICKENSON

THE COMPLETE BLUE NOTE SESSIONS
(Mosaic MR6-109, 6 LPs, boxed)

Recorded: New York City, 5 February 1941.
Johnny's In For, Edward Hall Blues; Profoundly Blue
(2 takes), *Celestial Express*.
Ed Hall Celeste Quartet. Hall (cl), Meade Lux Lewis
(cl), Charlie Christian (g), Israel Crosby (b)

Recorded: New York City, 17 November 1943.
J.P. Boogie, Backwater Blues, Carolina Balmoral, Gas
Sneep
Johnson (p)

Recorded: New York City, 29 November 1943.
High Society (5 takes); *Blues At Blue Note* (2 takes);
Night Shift Blues (2 takes), *Royal Garden Blues* (2
takes), *Blue Note Boogie*.
Ed Hall's Blue Note Jazzmen: DeParis (t),
Dickenson (tb), Hall (cl), Johnson (p), Jimmy
Shirley (g), Crosby (b); Sidney Cartlett (d).

Recorded: New York City, 15 December 1943.
Mule Walk, Arkansas Blues, Caprice Rag,
Improvisation On Pinesp' Boogie.
Johnson (p).

Recorded: New York City, 25 January 1944.
Rescue' In '44 (2 takes), *Blue Interval, Smooth Sailing*
(2 takes), *Scen' Red*.
Ed Hall's All-Star Quintet. Hall (cl), Teddy Wilson
(p), Carl Kress (g), John Williams (b), Red Norvo
(vb).

Recorded: New York City, 4 March 1944.
Blue Mizz (2 takes), *Victory Stride* (2 takes); *Jay*
Nesim', After You're Gone.
James P. Johnson's Blue Note Jazzmen: DeParis (t),
Dickenson (tb), Ben Webster (ts), Johnson (p),
Shirley (g), John Simmons (b); Cartlett (d).

Recorded: New York City, 5 May 1944.
It's Been So Long (2 takes), *I Can't Believe That You're*
In Love With Me (2 takes); *Big City Blues, Beamen'*
And Steamin'.
Ed Hall Swingtet. Benny Morton (tb); Harry Gray
(b), Hall (cl), Don Frye (p); Everett Barksdale (g);
Junior Raglin (b); Cartlett (d).

Recorded: New York City, 21 June 1944.
Everybody Loves My Baby (2 takes), *Ballin' The Jack,*
Who's Sorry Now? (2 takes), *The Call Of The Blues,*
Sidney DeParis's Blue Note Jazzmen: DeParis (t);
Dickenson (tb), Hall (cl), Johnson (p), Shirley (g),
Simmons (b); Cartlett (d).

Recorded: New York City, 26 October 1944.
Travelling Blues (2 takes); *Walkin' The Dog* (2 takes),
Easy Rider, At The Ball (2 takes).
James P. Johnson's Blue Note Jazzmen: DeParis (t);

Dickenson (tb), Hall (cl); Johnson (p); Shirley (g), Al
Lucas (b), Arthur Trappier (d)

Recorded: New York City, 14 June 1951.
When You Were A Tidy (2 takes), *Wary Blues, Moss*
March, Panama, Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm
Gone, A Good Man Is Hard To Find.
Sidney DeParis's Blue Note Jazzmen: DeParis (t),
Jimmy Archey (tb), Omer Simeon (cl), Bob Green
(p), Papa Foster (b), Joseph Smith (d).

Recorded: New York City, 24 June 1952.
Yesterday, I'm Getting Sentimental Over You, Love's Den
(2 takes), *In A Millionaire*.
Dickenson (tb); Hall Doggett (org), John Collins (g),
Jo Jones (d).

THEIR CONCENTRATION on hitherto neglected material has led the Mosaic reissues to emphasise the stylistically conservative aspects of Blue Note's output. Certainly much of the above has long been virtually impossible to obtain, the most precious items being Johnson's piano solos. The best of Hall's dates, though, explore unsuspected potentialities of traditional material, and the quarter's instrumentation sets up fresh relationships within the band. Thus with piano supplanted by celeste Christian's acoustic guitar takes on added presence and Crosby's bass is substantially liberated, as in "Profoundly Blue". Chiming away merrily, Lewis often suggests elves dancing exultantly to fast blues. He had recorded solos on the instrument before, of course, and would soon record on a harpsichord for Blue Note. Celeste, harpsichord or whatever, one quickly hears why, as Grover Sales lately reminded me, Art Tatum praised Lewis's blues playing so highly. Was an all-blues programme chosen to accommodate him? On records, at least, he did not play much else. What might have happened if Albert Ammons had been in Lewis's place? Although they were linked in boogie fame, Ammons had a considerably wider professional experience; but he apparently lacked his friend's curiosity about instruments. Nor surprisingly, Christian, unelectrified, sounds more bucolic, softer at the edges; and he is very impressive on both takes of "Profoundly Blue".

Hall's quintet has another unusual instrumentation, replacing celeste with vibraharp, adding Wilson's distinguished piano: it is always good to hear the latter on the blues, and he finds some unusual

opportunities on this session. The rhythm is strong yet, without drums, always light: much credit is due to Williams, who, though less imaginative than Crosby, provides a more propulsive beat. Hall is more aggressive than on the celeste date, popping with ideas, and "Blue Interlude" has a beautiful sequence of solos, none with a note too many. With the harsh assertion of much contemporary live jazz ringing in the ears, one is almost hemmed by such restraint. "Smooth Sailing" is more of the same at up tempo, but the greater speed does not tempt virtuosity to excess. Everyone's invention is tightly packed in "Scen' Red", too, with not a bar wasted.

Yet another uncommon line-up is used by Hall's Swingeret, with an intriguing choice of personnel. It is curious to find Carmey in this setting, although he sounds happy enough. Benny Morton is sober, and hence underrated, but like Archey on DeParis's second date he is far more satisfying than Dickenson, who was obviously a Blue Note favourite. Hear Morton's acutely expressive solo on "Big City Blues", its every note exact in intention and effect. There is a good running commentary by Frye on this piece, although he is surpassed in this vein elsewhere. Shirley's initial "Beamen' And Steamin'" solo appears sadly futile after Christian and Kress. Such comparisons may be undesirable but they cannot be avoided in ears like this. Cartlett, a man who shone equally in the company of Bechet and Bird, need fear no comparisons, and is near his best form on all four sessions in which he takes part. I sympathise with the objections Richard Cook made to pre-modern rhythm sections in his piece on Mosaic's Bechet box (*Wire 24*). Though I did not feel the limitation when this music was newer, it gradually became obvious that at least some phases of postwar jazz swung more than swing and earlier forms usually did. However, RC acknowledged that SC was an exception.

MORE CONVENTIONAL in repertoire and personnel were Hall's Blue Note Jazzmen, though Johnson was a fairly surprising choice for pianist. Such material was Blue Note's response to the New Orleans Revival, and it is hard to be so positive about it as about the music discussed above and some of that dealt



JAMES P. JOHNSON



VIC DICKENSON



SIDNEY DEPARIS

with below. By this time there was not much challenge left, for such musicians, in pieces like "High Society". They became far more stale in the hands of lesser men, of course, yet it is symptomatic that in the second take of "Royal Garden Blues" DeParis gets rather too close to King Oliver's famous "Dippermouth" solo. Forceful and effective ensemble counterpoint by Hall is the chief pleasure of "High Society", but the looser format of "Blues At Blue Note" offers more scope. DeParis has fiercely muted yet volatile solos fore and aft, and Johnson accompanies everyone imaginatively, surpassing Frye on the Swinget date. "Night Shift" is similar though more relaxed, with lovely ensemble playing by Hall and DeParis.

Johnson is given few opportunities until "Blue Note Boogie" comes up, and then he riffs away steadily with an invention and gaiety not matched by anyone except Catlett. Had the others been as good this would have been one of the finest pieces of small combo boogie on record. Of course, the Johnson heard on the band sessions under Hall's, DeParis's and his own name is a rather different musician from the one we think of, or should think of, as the first great jazz pianist. He was very active as a theatrical composer in the 1920s, as a symphonic composer in the 30s (for a few surviving fragments of what remains from his efforts in the latter direction hear *William Albright's* *The Symphonic Jazz* of James P. Johnson on *Music Heritage Society MHS-4888W*), and though he was quick off the mark with a few solo recordings in 1921 and '23, it seems as if his jazz playing, however brilliant, was a quite subsidiary interest. Certainly he did not make his main — and still small — body of solo recordings until the 1940s, for Asch, Signature, Decca and particularly Blue Note. In fact, exaggerated though such claims inevitably seem, his two solo dates for this last company produced one of the finest bodies of music in all recorded piano jazz.

The solo nearest in style to Hall's "Blue Note Boogie" is obviously "J P Boogie", and the idiom somewhat compromises Johnson's individuality. "Improvisations On Pinetop's Boogie" is a better piece altogether, and if the relation to Smith's original 1928 record is oblique that is the privilege of imaginative

variations. There are touches in some of the latter choruses which are beyond the scope of any boogie pianist except Lewis, and the truth is that Johnson came up in ragtime, which, like Jelly Roll Morton, he transformed into jazz, the blues (of which boogie is an aspect) being less central to him. "Caprice Rag" was copyrighted in 1914, and Johnson remembered playing "Mule Walk" and "Gut Stomp" in New York in the teens of the century for what he called "country dances" for people "from around Charleston, South Carolina, and other places in the South".

"Mule Walk" does indeed sound more countrified than the other pieces, yet there is nothing in the least unsophisticated about the restlessly dancing syncopations of this performance. In fact although such items were undoubtedly perceived as ragtime when they first appeared Johnson plays them as unequivocal jazz (as he did "Keep Off The Grass" and "Carolina Shout" when he recorded them in 1921). "Gut Stomp" has two 16-bar themes that are irregularly alternated through ten choruses. This amusingly suggests a syncopation of Haydn's principle of "double variations", though both Johnson's themes are in the same key, missing the effect of Haydn's switching between major and minor. "Arkansas Blues" interestingly uses both 12- and 16-bar chorus lengths, while "Carolina Balmoral" has a marvellous 16-bar theme from which are spun 15 variations that are packed with the most telling contrasts, full of quickly shifting rhythmic *claws*. (It sounds like the essence of jazz, yet, typically, Johnson had earlier prepared a version of this piece for symphony orchestra.)

WE MOVE DOWN FROM such an exalted level for the rest of the music here, but there remain some interesting points. For example, "Victory Stride", from Johnson's first Blue Note Jazzmen session, is listed as a composition of his yet sounds like a very close relation of Ellington's "Jubilee Stomp". As a complication, Johnson's influence on Ellington's playing is especially apparent in the several band versions he recorded of this piece in 1928. Who actually wrote it? The inclusion of Webster, in place of a clarinetist, on Johnson's March 1944 date is unexpected,

and it is curious to hear him improvising on something close to what is supposedly an Ellington piece from long before his time with the band. This whole matter, incidentally, was first raised by Eric Thacker, and now might be the moment to admit that many other points made here were likewise purloined from the searching and substantial essay he wrote for the booklet which accompanies this set.

On this March 1944 session Johnson is able to show himself a most sensitive accompanist, something not often heard on such dates, and there are graceful, elegant solos from him. DeParis is forthright as well, and something more than that in "Joy Mentin". Johnson's second Jazzmen session offers some more unusual repertoire, but Catlett is missed, as he is from DeParis's second date. Solos like DeParis's on "Walkin' The Dog" are considerably more impressive than the ensembles on all the Jazzmen sessions, as the latter tend to conform to established patterns. There are echoes of Bubler Miley and, again, Oliver in DeParis's "Tishomingo Blues" and "Easy Rider" solos, their style being close to that of his own noteworthy "Call Of The Blues". There is little to mark this jazz as Johnson's apart from his characteristic solo on the first version of "After The Ball", easily the performance's best feature. The second attempt is too fast, and it is odd that it should have been chosen for initial release.

A similar comment applies to the pair of "Everybody Loves My Baby" takes from the first date under DeParis's name. "Ballin' The Jack" includes a Johnson solo that evokes Lewis's celeste. DeParis's other session came seven years later, and the New Orleans Revival had suddenly had its effect even on musicians like these. Archey keeps making unexpected yet effective moves in the ensembles, however, and Simeon's presence is an agreeable surprise. As his playing with Ory already had shown, despite all his years in large swing bands, he retained full mastery of the New Orleans clarinet style; and his contributions relate interestingly to the strong Morton influence on Green's playing.

Alas — or, if you like, Hooray — the combination of Dickenson and an electric organ, albeit played by Doggett with restraint, reduces me to silence at last.





MIKE WESTBROOK: A MAN, A TUBA AND A MANDOLIN

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KEITH TIPPETT SEPTET

A LOOSE KITE IN A GENTLE WIND
FLOATING WITH ONLY MY WILL FOR
AN ANCHOR

(Ogun OGD 007/8)

Recorded: Barnfield Theatre, Exeter, 25 October
1984

A Loose Kite . . . Parts 1-4, Dedicated to Margot
Mark Chang (t, rbn), Nick Evans (trb), Elton Dean
(sax, ss), Larry Stabbins (ss, ts), Tippett (p), Paul
Rogers (b), Tony Levin (d)

MIKE WESTBROOK

LOVE FOR SALE

(Int ART 2031)

Recorded: Theatre Danus, Paris, 7-8 December
1985

*Revenge Suite, Lush Life, Love For Sale, England Have
My Lion, Fefema, Badly Can You Spare A Dime, A
Pagan Tree, Bamboo Boogie, In The Black Mists, Inter,
Savannah Jumpy, Soud, Crazy For Swing, Wildcat,
Kawwassong, Two Blues, Le Morte Naufrage, Les
Complains Du Tizani, Boudhaan Lady*

Kate Westbrook (v, thn, ban f, pcc), Chris Bescoe
(ss, ss, bs, ar), Mike Westbrook (p, rba, v)

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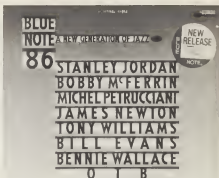
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In any jazz category you care to poll, vocalist Bobby McFerrin is the iconoclastic genius to watch. On his Blue Note debut, he combines several studio creations with seven live performances recorded last February at Hollywood's Aquarius Theatre. McFerrin's voice spins out funky and jazzy lines of lyrics, horn melodies, bass patterns and percussion on the spot. His amazingly full vocal solos include his own 'Thinkin' About Your Body' and Joan Armatrading's 'Opportunity'.

Duets include an astonishing sonic exercise with saxophonist Wayne Shorter, an hilarious blues parody with comic Robin Williams, the enticing 'Turtle Shoes' with Herbie Hancock and a reappearance of his 'Another Night In Tunisia' with Manhattan Transfer, a performance that won two Grammys at this year's awards.



'BLUE NOTE '86 - A New Generation Of Jazz'
BQ 85127

Resurrecting the Blue Note label, which for several decades was the commercial and artistic Rolls Royce of jazz labels, has meant more than just rescuing its magnificent and much sought-after catalogue.

It has meant discovering and recording new artists whose potential lives up to the standards that were set by the label long ago.

This specially-priced compilation offers the jazz consumer a chance to sample the great works of Blue Note's new artists with one easy purchase.

Top of the line performances by Michael Petrucciani, Bobby McFerrin, Stanley Jordan, Bennie Wallace, Tony Williams, O.T.B., Bill Evans and James Newton are collected and programmed into this flowing anthology that should win new friends and fans for all involved. 'Blue Note '86' is an overview of what is new at Blue Note. It is also a statement of just how diversified and unique jazz has become in the hands of its contemporary artists.

BLUE NOTE '86
VARIOUS
ALBUM: BQ 85127

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LOU DONALDSON
LUSH LIFE
ALBUM: BST 84254



SAM RIVERS
DIMENSIONS AND EXTENSIONS
ALBUM: BST 84251



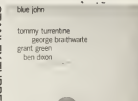
HORACE PARLAN
HAPPY FRAME OF MIND
ALBUM: BST 84134



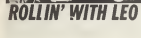
LEO PARKER
ROLLIN' WITH LEO
ALBUM: BST 84095



STANLEY TURRENTINE
JUBILEE SHOUT
ALBUM: BST 84122



JOHN PATTON
BLUE JOHN
ALBUM: BST 84143



STANLEY TURRENTINE
TOMMY TURRENTINE
ALBUM: BST 84122



GEORGE BRAITHWAITE
GRANT GREEN
ALBUM: BST 84122



BEN DEON
BEN DEON
ALBUM: BST 84122

In its heyday, Blue Note sometimes listed albums in catalogues and on inner sleeves which ultimately were never released. Recently, the original artwork and master tapes for these legendary albums were discovered. In

1985, were released Freddie Hubbard's 'Here To Stay' (BST 84135) from these 'lost' albums. With this month's release, we introduce six more, all with previously unseen artwork and the original missing catalogue numbers.

his whole playing life and he still makes music with only the most meagre concessions to his audience. It's just that the spirit of this personal course seems to have been smothered by the sheer effort of it all. The music here has a dank, unmovable quality, as if the gloomy rigour of his writing has set hard. Sticky ground, of course – this is like channelling a man for holding on to a single-minded vision, which is the opposite of what we usually do. But *A Kite* is a long, exhausted set that gives me little pleasure.

Tippett as a composer-arranger is tirelessly morose. Maybe he would like to be a British Mingus, but he can't command the spark that such a curmudgeon could always call onto the bandstand. Though he says on the sleeve that *A Kite* was written for the players who perform it, the music has a fudged, rambling feel that the soloists put no special stamp on. The best moments come when the playing is serene and composed: it isn't as inchoate as Tippett's music sometimes is, but there's little you can call memorable. The pianist himself is in shadow for much of the time, while the horns seem gripped by a lack of purpose. One feels like asking why this music is being played. Only on the closing "Tribute To Mingus", where there is an excellent, choleric theme to work off, does the group muster a real brooding spirit. Paul Rogers plays a plucky improvisation.

One is finally left with an impression of terrible weariness. It seems cruel to say it, but it's as though these men have signally failed to get their music very far or get very far with it. A strong young generation of players snaps at their heels. Will they end up the same way?

Or will they become like Mike Westbrook, who never seems to get tired? Westbrook's zest for ransacking the century's song tradition – as well as its jazz and compositional resources – keeps turning out music that's acrid with poignancy, rowdy humour, showman's gaucy. The Westbrook canon is frequently hit and miss: whole LPs can seem like aesthetic blunders, long compositions may provide only flashes of excitement. One still can't fault the fellow's opportunism, his alchemical touch.

Love For Sale, a Paris show of 18 songs, might turn out to be my favourite Westbrook record, because it's a museum piece brought brilliantly to life: all that digging around in Blake, Brecht and Rumbaut pays a handsome reward here. The trio of Mike and Kate plus Chris Biscoe on reeds is weighted just right: the attention doesn't flag over four long sides. A few things, like "Revenge Sweet" and "England Have My Bones", are hilarious breakneck travesties, but most are played at a pace that lets Mike and Kate play every syllable around her mouth and enables the other two to punctuate wittily or mournfully or knowingly in the background.

This is really Kate Westbrook's record. If

some of her characterisations have sounded a little too cartoon-cute in the past, these are dazzling. She can be girlish or bitter or fiendish or sorrowful or blowy. "Lush Life" has never been so luxuriously defeated; "Buddy Can You Spare A Dame?" begins in exaggeration and ends in tragedy. Chris Biscoe isn't quite strong enough to carry his exposed role without strain but he finds a suitable note of cracked dignity. Mike does his composer's piano and some puffing tuba. Superbly recorded, this is the ideal document of a set they've been playing and polishing for a long time. Next, surely, another change.

Richard Cook

ANTHONY BRAXTON

8KN-(B12)

R10

(Sound Aspects SAS 009)

Recorded: Köln, 10 November 1979

8KN-(B12)-R10 (quartet), AOTH/MBA/H, (448-R)-C-234; 8KN-(B12)-R10 (quartet), KSZMK/PQ/EGN; SOVA/NOU/IV-(A0); RORRT/3JHTT/4; NATKTD-(B)

Anthony Braxton (as, solo A2, A3, B2-5, and with Robert Schumann String Quartet A1); Robert Schumann Quartet: Michael Geiser, Chiharu Yuhki (viola), Jürgen Weber (viola), Wolfgang Muehlhans (clarinet) – B1.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR: why say it last?

Composition SYN-017 – as it's given in the *Catalogue of Work* – goes down at once as one of the genuinely significant compositions for string quartet of the last 25 years, something to put alongside Carter, Ferneyhough, Sampson, Ligeti.

Braxton doesn't beat around the bush either "an affirmation of material specifics as well as ensemble input... [an] insight into the 'state of the art' of contemporary string pedagogy". Technically, the piece is phenomenal, placing enormous demands on the performers; the material is grouped into 16 pages of visual notation from which the musicians select and repeat at will, working within an overstructure punctuated by cues from the first chair. If that sounds desiccated, it comes across with total conviction and with a greater warmth than we usually look for in Braxton's 'non-jazz' work.

The three 'movements' are structurally loose – we've got as far here from sonata form as seems decent – but emotionally and thematically self-consistent. Braxton's presence on the first version documented acts almost as a commentary or gloss, clearly underlining the work's archaeological origins in jazz and bebop; hence the need for caution with 'non-jazz'. The second, true quartet version, briefer and tighter, comes along with redoubled force.

Three of the accompanying solo sax pieces will be familiar in rather longer studio versions from the 1979 release *Alto Saxophone Improvisations* (Arista A2L 8602). These

Braxton identified the motivation as "post-Webern organization and/or John Coltrane saxophone licks". These days, "rationalized improvisation" perhaps makes better sense of it. It's instructive to compare the Arista recordings (which, incidentally, 'featured' some incredibly noisy pad and key clicks) with the German concert versions made a year later. What the contrast reveals, interestingly, is sameness rather than radical variations; these later versions are tighter and more assured but the pieces are in essence identical.

AOTH/MBA/H is an incredible 'Flight Of The Bumble Bee' affair over some hairy scales. KSZMK/PQ/EGN explores the limits of 'attack', mouthed rather than tongued, percussive, closer to Braxton's contrabass-end stuff. In strict contrast, SOVA/NOU/IV-(A0) is a drawn-out, off-key lament, exactly the sort of thing Coltrane might have been doing had he survived. These are Braxton's études, academic only in being research and pedagogy, utterly unacademic in spirit. It's staggering to see that this is all the better part of a decade ago.

Why say it once? Album of the year so far, for this is the sort of stuff that restores faith in progress by the bucket.

Brian Morton

WYNTON MARSALIS

TOMASO CONCERTO FOR TRUMPET AND ORCHESTRA;

JOLIVET: CONCERTINO FOR TRUMPET,

STRING ORCHESTRA AND PIANO;

CONCERTO NO 2 FOR TRUMPET

(CBS Masterworks IM 42096)

Recorded: Walthamston Town Hall, London. Wynton Marsalis (tr), Philadelphia Orchestra, Esa-Pekka Salonen, director.

BRANFORD MARSALIS

ROMANCES FOR SAXOPHONE

(CBS Masterworks M 42122)

Recorded: Henry Wood Hall, London, n/d. Debussy *L'Île Joyeuse*; Faure *Pavane*; Scriabin *Pastorale*; Columer *Ensemble*; Villa-Lobos *Bachianas Brasileiras No 3*; Satie *Gymnopédie No 3*; Ravel *Prélude (from Le Tombeau de Couperin)*; Ravel *Pierrot* (from *Le Tombeau de Couperin*); Ravel *Pavane* (from *Le Tombeau de Couperin*); Stravinsky *Serenade (from Pulcinella)*; Mussorgsky *The Old Castle (from Pictures at an Exhibition)*; Rachmaninov *Chamber Variations*. Branford Marsalis (ss), English Chamber Orchestra (and Chorus on "Pavane"), Andrew Litton, director.

THERE'S A LOT OF INK spilt already over the 'legitimacy' of these two albums. In Wynton's case, some are arguing, a further foray into classicism amounts to little more than hypocrisy given his own very public strictures. With Branford, the big swing up-market only compounds the sell-out, all that messing with the likes of Sting. So it runs, and much of it pretty well beside the point. Whatever the rights and wrongs, we're still left with four

sides of music.

Four sides of inevitably uneven quality. Any shift of this sort is going to expose one inescapable fact: while there's a long-established canon of concert music for trumpet, much of the serious stuff for the parvenu sax is pretty duff, odds and sods, mood pieces, dodgy transcriptions.

There's actually only one mood on *Romance For Saxophone* (signalled in the title and in the 'Light Classics' labelling, so no complaints) and that's pastel-mellow. It might have been sleazy had it not been so clinically played. Doubts about the appropriateness of a jazzman playing white music might better have been translated into qualms about a gifted technician performing such undemanding tar.

The Rachmaninov 'Vocalises', originally for soprano voice, works well, as do 'Gymnopedie No. 3' and the Ravel 'Habanera', but all that romanticism can't be good for anybody.

In contrast, Wynton brings a brittle sophistication and at the same time a hint of real expressive edge to three much-underrated 20th-century works. These are within a recognisable tradition, linked back to Hummel and Haydn through Arthur Honegger's use of solo trumpet with string orchestra in his Second Symphony.

Before the war Henri Tomasi was head of the French National Radio colonial system. ('Colonial', needless to say has become a red for Wynton's back, but it should be remembered that Tomasi was of Corsican descent and thus one of the colonised himself.) The infusion of North African elements into his work added some striking effects to basically neo-classical premises and the 1949 *Concerto* is refreshingly unshowish, an extraordinary exercise in containment, its energies never allowed to become indulgent or to run sloppily. Tomasi's career ended with the *Chant Pour Le Vietnam* and a moving *Third World Symphony*; the attacks on Wynton for attempting this earlier work are both prejudiced and ill-researched.

André Jolivet's *Concertos* from 1948 is almost as interesting for the piano part as for the trumpet. Like his near-contemporary Tomasi, Jolivet borrows extensively (neo-colonially?) from a wide spectrum of music. The mixture of pronounced rhythm and heavy colouration of melody comes direct from jazz. That influence is most noticeable at the beginning of the second *Trumpet Concerto*, a mid-50s piece and Jolivet's most completely successful work. The jazz and blues borrowings here are overt and technical, not just structural. Jolivet writes in muted and wah-wah passages which help give the whole piece its emotional rhythm, by turns lugubrious, assertive, melancholy, affirmative.

It's precisely this that Branford's album lacks. Like Miss Hepburn on stage, he runs the whole gamut from A to B. It's not that he lacks the chops for this game, it's just that he's

playing with the wrong axe. (Memo, next time round, take a leaf from young Brother's book, try these – Jolivet's 'Fantaisie-Impromptu' for sax and piano or Tomasi's 'Printemps' for sax and wind quintet.)

Brian Morton

BILLY COBHAM POWERPLAY (GRP 91027)

Recorded: New York, 1986
Times Of My Life, Zanzibar Breeze, Radioactive, A Light Shines In Your Eye, Savonni Afrique, Desolate Cocoon, Tinseltown
Cobham (d), Dean Brown (g-synth), Baron Browne (b), Su Davis (perc), Gerry Elkins (ky), Onaje Allan Gumbs (ky).

I STARTED YEARNING for an incisive saxophone solo about three minutes into this recording and thereafter, despite trying to find interest in what was present rather than regretting absences, I couldn't overcome the feeling that this album, despite its meticulous production, lacks an arresting focus.

'Times Of My Life' is typical – standard fusion fare: a beautifully produced, tinclily, shimmering, swirling synthesised backing with a thunderous backbeat, the foreground alive with little skittering percussive figures and meandering solos. 'Zanzibar Breeze' is pretty; 'Radioactive' bustles busily along – indeed the whole album bristles with energy and carefully controlled power – but my admiration for the precision through which the rich texture of these tracks has been achieved is outweighed, in the end, by my wish that there had been more unrestrained raw passion let loose on them.

'Tinseltown' is a good example of the problem with this album: an arresting theme the possibilities of which are never thoroughly explored, partly because the beat is too rigid and relentless to allow a soloist's individuality room to breathe and partly because texture reigns so supreme that it seems to be an end in itself.

Chris Parker

JESS STACY/RALPH SUTTON STACY 'N' SUTTON (Affinity AFS 1020)

Recorded: Los Angeles 16 March/10 April 1951
You Took Advantage Of Me, Encouraging Rhythm, I Can't Get Started, I Want To Be Happy, Indiana, Stars Fell On Alabama, If I Could Be With You, Oh, Baby, Stacy (g), George Van Es (g), Morty Corb (b), Nick Fatool (d).

Recorded: New York, 3 June 1953
Jeepers Creepin', I'll Drive At Your Wedding, Fanny's Eye Opener, I Ain't Nobody's Bizzness If I Do, Smoky Morning Blues, Stoned Out, I Got Rhythm
Sutton (p), Cliff Leeman (d)

IN THESE DAYS WHEN GETTING ON TO RECORD is relatively easy – if all else fails you can hire a studio, press your disc and release it on your own label, give a certain amount of money – it

becomes easy to lose track of how little moments of some artists. The two dates collected on this one represent about half of everything Jess Stacy did as a leader (though he recorded often in Benny Goodman's and Bob Crosby's big bands) over a career spanning near enough 40 years. They are more than welcome, Stacy's strong yet delicate work, rooted in and honed from Earl Hines but infusing his own view and typifying everything that we come to think of as 'swing era' is complemented by a three-man rhythm section working in a way that has become a lost art – all playing straight to the beat but neither getting in each other's way nor sounding the least bit stodgy. In some ways it is unfair to pick out any track above the rest, but for me it all comes to a head on 'Stars Fell On Alabama', a brief but flawless performance, though 'If I Could Be With You' and 'I Can't Get Started' are almost as good.

Ralph Sutton hasn't exactly been over-recorded either, though he is better represented than Stacy overall. This set is typically robust, with Sutton striding briskly all over his material, supported only by Cliff Leeman's brushwork. This is a combination that works well, as drums and piano always has for my money whenever anyone's had the nerve to try it. Pullen and Graves it ain't, nor is it Cecil and Sunny, but it does prove conclusively that the format works elsewhere.

So, one way and another, a consistently interesting collection, and one that at times has a lovely magic all its own.

Jack Cooke

BARNEY KESSEL LET'S COOK

(Boplicity/Contemporary COP 028)
Recorded: Los Angeles, 6 August & 11 November 1957
Let's Cook, Time Remembered, Just In Time, Barney Kessel (g), Vic Farris (tbl), Hampton Hawes (p), Leroy Vinnegar (b), Shelly Manne (d)

Tap Rag, Jersey Bounce
Barney Kessel (g), Ben Webster (ts), Frank Rosolino (tb), Jimmie Rowles (p), Leroy Vinnegar (b), Shelly Manne (d).

FOR SOMEONE WHOSE IDEA of a potted history of the guitar reads off something like Charley Patton, Robert Johnson, Elmore James, Ry Cooder, Jeff Murrin Tepper, Barney Ulmer et al., then the prospect of a record by Barney Kessel, with a full supporting West Coast crew in tow to boot, is not one which turns my grey skies blue, as they say. And while I hate to tell myself 'I told you so', I have to concede that within the grooves of this slab of plastic lies some of the most gutless music you are likely to hear this side of a Hermosa Beach jam session.

On side one Hollywood's finest get to put down the next payment on that crazy little bucket-seated Corvette, and no one ever thinks of getting in the way of the other guy's pay

cheque. It is all so bloody civilized and sober, that by the end I would not have been at all surprised to hear an announcement that the whole thing had been sponsored by The Temperance Society of America. Things pick up slightly on side two with Ben Webster blowing nicely enough on an otherwise faintly ridiculous version of "Tiger Rag", but Frank Rosolino's efforts to sprinkle a little spice into the proceedings find little track with a rhythmic section that has found its groove and is sticking to it no matter what.

Lester Koenig gets to cap it all off with an absurd sleeve note, to wit: "the extraordinarily comprehensive and ageless musical fabric of this album". Well, I suppose he had to sell the damn thing somehow.

Tony Herrington

CHARLES MINGUS SEXTET CONCERTGEBOUW AMSTERDAM 10th APRIL 1964

(Ulysses Music AROC 50608)

Fables of Faubus, A.F.T. W.U.S.A.

(A.F.T. W.U.S.A.), *Sophisticated Lady*

Johnny Collins (tp), Clifford Jordan (ts), Eric Dolphy (b), D.J. Byard (p), Charles Mingus (b), Dannie Richmond (d)

AT THE BEGINNING the music is without form, and chaos moves upon the face of the disc. And then Mingus gives the word, and sheer anarchy is loosed. While not at the corrosive pitch of *Oh Yeah!* or *Mingus Presents Mingus* this session still has some gloriously venomous moments.

These tracks are presumably the balance of the concert not covered by the two-disc first volume reviewed in *Wire* 22. Again the sound quality is variable, but it really doesn't matter. This band cannot be regarded as a classic Mingus line-up but his most inspiring sparring partners, Richmond and Dolphy, are there. Dolphy had left an earlier Mingus working band in 1960 on less than amiable terms, and the tensions then had produced some breathtaking music. He returned as a regular sideman many weeks before this recording, and seems completely at home.

"Fables of Faubus" are shorn of their words, but there can be no doubt that Mingus is treating a subject for which he has only anger and contempt. Evidently, as with the first recording of the *Fables*, a degree of entrepreneurial censorship was operating for fear of legal action. Mingus kicks off by calling "George Wein . . . you tell me not to say nothing . . . adding sardonically "Freedom for America!" What follows is a 31-minute workout in which the bass is at its most vocalized and Richmond's percussion makes sure none of the soloists relaxes for a moment. When he is not lurching from one tempo to another he is sneakily pushing the beat so that his colleagues and the listener have to be constantly alert if they are to keep their balance. Although the vocal passages are missing Byard and, especially, Mingus parade

a series of fragmented "patriotic" tunes which get the message across more than adequately, and which probably influenced the form. Charlie Haden's "Circus '68/69" was to take on *Liberation Music*. Coles and Jordan contribute some very good work but of the horns only Dolphy achieves anything like the sort of ferocity Mingus's music demands, dragging the track towards the concluding melée.

The album ends with two short pieces: a stride piano item and a piano/bass tribute to Ellington. These are the minors to follow the main meal; pleasant enough, but if the box had been empty when you got to it your nourishment would not have suffered. Anything by Mingus or Dolphy is an adventure. Indiscretion and risk-taking are if anything even rarer today than two decades ago, so I recommend that you check this out soonest.

Barry Witherden



BUNNY BERIGAN THE INDISPENSABLE BUNNY BERIGAN 1937-1939

(RCA NL 89744)

Recorded New York, March 1937 - November 1939.

Henrykule Rose, Blues, "Can't My Baby Say It's So, Swanee River, All God's Chollon Got Rhythm, Frankie and Johnny, Mahogany Hall Stomp, Turn Out That Red-Hot Heat, A Study In Brown, I Can't Get Started, The Professor's Song, Mama, I Wanna Make Rhythm, Black Bottom, Russian Lullaby, Azure, The Wacana' Of The Green, Levery Stable Blues, High Society, Rockin' Rollin', Jubilee, Sobbin' Blues, Jelly Roll Blues, In A Muz, Flamingo, Davenport Blues, Carollelight, In The Dark, Walkin' The Dog, Blue Lou, The Blues, Jazz: Me Blues, There'll Be Some Changes Made, Little Girl's Special, Pig O' My Heart, Night Song, Ain't She Sweet Berigan (tc) with various big bands and small groups

TOMMY DORSEY THE INDISPENSABLE TOMMY DORSEY VOLS 5 & 6

(RCA NL 89589)

Recorded New York or Chicago, 1938-39.

Cochran's For Two, Old Black Joe, Dawn Hone Rag, Hawaiian War Chant, Davenport Blues, It's All Yours, Mileberg Joy, Hold Tight, Honolulu, Blue Moon, Pickin' With The Penguins, Got No Time, Little Skipper, Our Love, You For Two, By The River Suite, Marine, Aisle Of Awake, You Grow Sweeter At The Yards Go By, If You Ever Change Your Mind, To You, This Is No Dream, Marching, The Lamp Is Low, Dawn On The Desert, Why Begin Again, Lonesome Road, Rescued

You In Paris, How Am I To Know?, Is It Possible: Well, All Right, La Raine, All I Remember Is You Dorsey (tb), with various big bands

ARTIE SHAW THE INDISPENSABLE ARTIE SHAW VOLS 3 & 4

(RCA NL 89774)

Recorded New York or Chicago, 1940-42. *Friend, King For A Day, Special Delivery Stomp, Sweetest Ridge Drive, Chances-Les Bar: Star Dust, Blues, What Is There To Say, Who's Excited?, Prelude In C Major, When The Quail Came Back To San Quentin, Concerto For Clarinet, Moon Glow, Confessin', Love Me A Little Little, Beyond The Blue Horizon, Blues In The Night, Radium Chair, Take Your Shoes Off Baby, Solid Sam, Just Kiddin' Around, It's Just An Infirmary, Dearest Wild, Someone's Rocking My Dreamboat, Corned Al, Needlecase, Two In One Blues, Someone I Feel Like A Motherless Child* Shaw (cl) with various big bands or his Gramercy Five

THE MORE ONE LISTENS to the big swing bands, the more interesting things keep turning up. Given that these were basically dance orchestras and that they all featured many more vocals than we might wish to remember (the same applies to Basie and Ellington, of course), a lot of front-tank jazz was produced in the course of a prolific recording output. Berigan, Shaw and Dorsey were three contrary spirits and each is in need of some kind of reappraisal.

Artie Shaw has usually been pegged as the most polished and classical of the big orchestras, mainly through the simple-minded equation of strings with 'the classical'. Together with themes like Shaw's own "Concerto For Clarinet", a chilly but enjoyable show of flamboyance. Artie never wanted just a 'dance band'. What one notices now about his group is the multi-levelled activity: arrangements pivot on shifting sections, diverse rhythms, anything that would add sophistication. Soloists cut deftly through quite complex patterns of call-and-response. Despite the romantic feel lent by the string parts, a sharpness of line is the Shaw characteristic, and it emerges most clearly in his own clarinet. "Who's Excited", for instance, has him bursting from the final passage with the glittering precision of a darning needle. The music is a strange truce between Shaw's taste for an intellectual complexity and his love of a swing band's visceral punch. On one session, Henry Allen and Benny Carter are present, and in the company of such peers Shaw's clarinet remains relaxed, quite in control.

Tommy Dorsey has been consigned to a limbo of sweetness, with the chocolate-smooth "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" his watermark. In fact he was one of the hardest white players of the 20s, and in the swing era he didn't altogether forget that attitude. There's a rasp about his band's section work that recalls the ornery records he made with the New York crowd of ten years before (his

brother Jimmy's band was even smoother, but – as anyone who's heard sides like "King Porter Stomp" knows – could also play hot. Dorsey saved some of his best later music for the small band out of the big band, the Clambake Seven, although there's still some excellent sides in this set. Maybe "Down Home Rag", say, is a rather too studied piece of proto-Dixieland, but it's hard to argue with the impassioned accuracy of Bix's "Davenport Blues" or "Milenberg Joys". Even the most commercial tracks work up subtleties of the sort that such a band wasn't supposed to have bothered with. "How Am I To Know?" is made delightful by having the band sing a counterpoint of contemporary song titles behind the main vocal, and then it floats on a fine Johnny Mince clarinet solo. Babe Russin and Dean Kincaide hold down some useful tenor work, Yank Lawson blows jocular trumpet and Dorsey himself occasionally peps up his demure statements enough to lift the band.

Bunny Berigan made no compromises on his own playing: he is one of the great trumpeters in jazz history. When a Berigan solo arrives, it's like a blast in the face, often starting out on a low register snare and building on a highly unorthodox sense of time. Berigan played with a savage intuition. As a bandleader he never seemed to amount to much, and the players who made most of these sides weren't the equal of the Shaw and Dorsey men. But the trumpeter seems impervious to the jostle of the ensembles and the plain arrangements. Few of the big white bands made such a straight transplantation of the old hot soloist into a larger setting. Berigan liked old material too: he improvises with laconic ferocity on "Sobbin' Blues" and in the extraordinary venture of recording Beiderbecke's five major compositions with a nine-piece band he constructs solos that, while staying Berigan-tough, act as an eerie requiem for Bix. Doomed by drink, Bunny's playing can seem as star-crossed as Bix's; in these uncentimentally arranged and performed pieces we get a unique bridge between two disparate yet closely linked stylisms.

Richard Cook

VARIOUS ARTISTS

THE JAZZ LIFE!

(Candid CS9019)

Recorded: New York, November 11, 1960.

R & R

Roy Eldridge (tr), Jimmy Knepper (tb), Eric Dolphy (as), Tommy Flanagan (p), Charles Mingus (b), Jo Jones (d).

Recorded: New York, November 13, 1960.

Black Cat

Lightnin' Hopkins (g, v)

Recorded: New York, January 13, 1961.

Farther And Soer

Cal Massey (tr), Julius Watkins (tr), Hugh Brodie (tr), Patti Brown (p), Jimmy Garrison (b), G. T. Hogan (d).

Recorded: Paris, c. Autumn 1960

Lord, Lord! I Love Gonna Know

Lucky Thompson (tr), Martial Solal (p), Peter Trunk (b), Kenny Clarke (d)

Recorded: New York, November 11, 1960

Varianese

Mingus (b), Lonnie Hillier, Ted Curson (tr), Charles McPherson (as), Dolphy (bcl), Booker Ervin (tr), Neco Bunkin (p), Dannie Richmond (d).

Recorded: New York, November 1, 1960.

Oh Yeah, Oh Yeah

Kenny Dorham, Benny Bailey (tr), Julian Priester (tb), Walter Benson (tr), Cecil Payne (bs), Peck Morrison (b), Max Roach (d).

EVEN IN 1961 this was not the first compilation selected to tie in with a book. What was different was that the author, Nat Hentoff, also produced the sessions, and that none of the tracks was available elsewhere. Only the Mingus, in fact, was ever separately reissued, until the very recent Mosaic box (MR4-111) which also has the Eldridge.

Hentoff always had an unerring ear for quality, but it's his stylistic breadth that makes this collection the most wide-ranging single album ever released. Individual items such as the two already mentioned are well up to their leaders' standards, while not wholly typical. Eldridge is stimulated by the 'mainstream' solos of Knepper and Dolphy, known at the time chiefly as Mingusmen, while the bassist's own track features the late (and, then, very young) Lonnie Hillier on the same ballad that Miles had recorded as "Smooch".

Lightnin' Hopkins, of course, could hardly be anything but typical, while trumpeters Dorman and Bailey both do well as KD's tune for an augmented Max Roach group (I'd never noticed before that the front-cover also advertises Booker Little, who was on the session but not on this particular track). Another trumpeter-composer, later championed by Archie Shepp, Cal Massey has a rather lacklustre group relieved by wonderful Julius Watkins and good pre-Tiane Garrison. Finally "Lord, Lord", intended to display the U.S. expatriates Thompson and Clarke, also highlights briefly the European promise of Solal.

These last two tracks were the only ones issued from their individual sessions before the Candid label went the way of so many other ambitious jazz series, and the material here may have previously appealed because of its rarity. Certainly the identity of *The Jazz Life*, divorced from the book, is diffuse in the extreme, but its reappearance is nonetheless welcome.

Brian Priestley

DAVID LIEBMAN & RICHIE BEIRACH DOUBLE EDGE

(Storyville SLP 4091)

Recorded: Copenhagen, 21 April 1985

Nanna, Rosalind Midnight, Indigo, On Green Dolphin Street, Lover Man, Some Other Time, Oslo.

Liebman (tr, ts, fl), Beirach (p)

WARNE MARSH AND RED MITCHELL HOT HOUSE

(Storyville SLP 4092)

Recorded: Stockholm, 18-19 April 1980

Hot House, Underline, Lover Man, Tea For Two, Goin' With The Wind, Ornithology, It Could Happen To You, Easy Living, I'm Getting Sentimental Over You, Marsh (tr), Mitchell (b)

DUOS HAVE NEVER FLOURISHED but they've become much more popular since the demise of the full rhythm section. They're also cheaper to book. Duo music, without a drummer to drive things along, can dawdle on the melody line – it needs a certain selflessness on the part of one partner at least if the music's going to keep a momentum. *Double Edge* suffers from a certain indulgence of impressionism. Beirach is a confident Evans disciple and Liebman a tesser spirit; they linger rather too dramatically over the material, a glum "Naima", a portentous "Round Midnight". The choice of tunes seems drab and unimaginative. But they colour the programme more vividly as it goes on – "Lover Man" is a flute solo, baroque in its delivery, and they finish with an "Oleo" that only visits the theme in a frenetic finale. A thoughtful LP that doesn't seem to add up to much.

Marsh and Mitchell play it safer – one or other drops out occasionally but it's mostly a single, linear dialogue that they make – and still manage to suggest and provoke many more variations. At North Sea I heard Red Mitchell play a bassman's jazz that was poetic, red-blooded and uniquely generous – he should be recognised as one of the giants of the instrument. Warne Marsh makes no concessions to the exposed format, twisting through the changes with the scratchy fluency that makes his tenor style so personal. There are a couple of startling octave changes in "Ornithology" that make you wonder if he has both tenor and alto fused into his horn. Their programme looks ordinary too, but in fact several of these tunes – even "Tea For Two" and "I'm Getting Sentimental" – have fallen out of regular use. On the bon numbers they stall sound fleet, on the ballads they offer an impassive tenderness, but the set isn't about washy emotional charges – the notes and their order are what count, and the skill and grace are feeling enough.

Richard Cook

JIMMY RANEY

A

(Prestige LP 7089)

Recorded: New York City, May 28, 1954 (tracks 1-4), February 18, 1955 (tracks 5-8), March 8, 1955 (tracks 9-12)

Double Images: Some Other Spring, On The Square, Mirror, Spring Is Here, One More For The Road, What's New Tomorrow, Fairly Cloudy, A Foggy Day, Cross Your Heart, Someone To Watch Over Me, You Don't Know What Love Is

Jimmy Raney (g), Hal Overton (p), Teddy Kotick (cl), John Wilson (tr, s), Art Mardigan (d), 1-4, Nick Sabulas (d, s) 5-12

RANEY FIRST CAME TO NOTICE ON THOSE OLD Stan Getz "Sitting In" albums, notably *At I Love and Bop*. In the years after Bird believers were out all over the place looking for fragments of the True Cross of bop and word came back that Raney had the authentic stamp.

The Raney season seemed overripe but the guitarist's career faltered after Parker's death, too many stultifying club residencies, not enough stimulus from his peers. In the end the weather never turned his way and it was always to be "Some Other Spring".

The 1954 quartet cuts here are mainly Raney originals, the one exception being "Some Other Spring". "Quartet" becomes slightly misleading on first hearing since the guitarist doubles with himself on the intros and ensemble passages, subtly countpointing the melodies into more substantial form.

"Double Image" and "Minor" spur some interesting interplay between Raney, Kotick and Overton but, by and large, the album fails to catch light till "Spring is Here", the final cut on the first side and the first of the later quartet sessions.

Much as I love Raney's pure, uncomplicated guitar lines, it's Wilson who makes *A* the delight it unquestionably is. He has a strangely melancholy, almost adolescent tone, voice breaking, passionate and diffident by turns, never quite articulate enough for the run of ideas and feeling backing up behind.

It's Overton who reinforces the rather earnest, schooled effect of the whole. A classical pianist – but not a slummer – he obtrudes the occasional bit of learning, too quickly and seamlessly to destroy the mood, just enough to register "One More For The Mode" is a Bach skit closer to Bud Powell than Jacques Loussier. "A Foggy Day" wrings every last drop of feeling from the theme and then, almost bored, discards it.

I've loved this one a long time. There's a conviction that these Prestige sets were never more than poor man's Blue Note and then there's the old one about guitar not "really" being a jazz instrument. Frankly, Scarlett

Brian Morton

BIG JOE TURNER HAVE NO FEAR, BIG JOE IS HERE (Savoy WL 70822)

Recorded New York/Chicago/Los Angeles, 1945-47

S K Blues Part I & II, Johnson & Turner Blues (2 takes), Watch That Jive, Howling Winds, Last Down Drill, I Got My Discharge Papers, Miss Brown Blues, I've Said In The Dark, My Gal's A Jockey, I Got Love For Sale, Sunday Morning Blues, Mud Blues, Playboy Blues, I've Said In The Dark, Miss Brown Blues, Playboy Blues, Rock Of Gibraltar (1st), Milk And Butter Blues, That's When It Really Starts, I've Sharp When I Hit The Coast, New Wave Baby Blues, Nobody In Mind, Lucille Lucille, Rude In My Bed, Candy Love, Last Goodbye Blues, White Ship Blues, Hollywood Blvd, Howling Winds

THE SUB-TITLE OF THE ALBUM reads "Roots Of Rock'n'Roll", but one should not be put off by it. Though it's true that this bulging tower of a man became, along with Fats Domino, one of the more unlikely heroes of the mid-50s r&B explosion, he did so without compromising or diluting his music one iota. It was perhaps typical of Big Joe that the rock'n'roll market adapted itself to him rather than vice versa.

Much of the material which he laid down in a recording career spanning close on half a century is readily available, from the early Decca sessions, through the classic Atlantic cuts of the 50s, to the Indian summer with Pablo Records. The 31 tracks on the present collection, his entire output for National, have been micro-grooved before, but their reappearance is none the less welcome and rounds out the vinyl representation of Joe's work.

Said work maintained an astonishing consistency of style and approach throughout that long career. It's often necessary to listen to the accompaniment and recording quality of a Turner performance to date it with any degree of accuracy, for the singing gives little away. Invariably, he adopts a flat-footed, shoulders-back approach to a song, employing few rasps, falsettos or other vocal gymnastics, relying on the power of his big, broad voice with its sardonic blue edge to carry the song. A comparison of the '47 cut of "Hollywood Bed", included here, with its '56 counterpart "Cherry Red" on the *Best Of The Blues* album is a case in point: the unmemorable band arrangement of the former gives way to a late-night, semi-gloss chart with Lawrence Brown's trombone stranding out cool and limpid; but Turner's vocals on the two are almost interchangeable, and none the worse for it.

This being so, aren't 31 tracks of the man a somewhat indigestible treat? After all, most of the selections are taken at fast-medium tempo and a couple of them are present in two versions. Well, once again it's all down to the bands behind Big Joe. The first side, most of which has Pete Johnson predominant in an ark which also includes Frankie Newton and Don Byas, is sheer quality, notably the second versions of "SK Blues" and "Johnson And Turner" and the rip-marring "Low Down Dog". By comparison, side two is chaotic. Turner's voice and personality naturally dominated any session, and wiser bands were content to complement him rather than compete with him. The bunch on side two, under the direction of Wild Bill Moore who should have known better, try to compete, with sadly predictable results. Tunes like "Discharge Papers" are almost wrecked by Al Williams' piano which clanks away like a rusty waterwheel, and by Warren Brocken's wasp-in-a-jamjar trumpet. Joe, bless him, sings out imperturbably as ever.

Side three benefits from the rippling muscles of Albert Ammons' piano, with "Sally

Zu-Zu" a coruscating performance. The last deck is over-burdened with standards which have been too frequently heard (though, to be fair, they hadn't been in '47). It has its moments, but some tracks, like "Careless Love", labour under a trumpeter who comes on like Louis Armstrong minus the talent.

So what have we here? A double LP with an exceedingly dumb title, for a kick-off, but that's no reflection upon its musical content. A showcase for that mighty Turner voice, certainly; a showcase for his music, less so. As with many "complete sessions" issues in the blues field, it's a little too much to take at one sitting, and most Big Joe fans could compile an excellent 14-track single LP from its contents. Nevertheless, sides one and three contain fine moments.

Mike Atherton



BOBBY HUTCHERSON GOOD BAIT

(Landmark LLP-501)

Recorded Berkeley, 9-10 August 1984
Love Savin'ha, Good Bait, Highway One, In Walked Bud, Montgomery, Spring Is Here, Israel, Branford Marsalis (ss, ts), Hutcherson (vib), George Cables (p), Ray Drummond (b), Philly Joe Jones (d).

COLOR SCHEMES

(Landmark LLP-1508)

Recorded Berkeley, 8-10 October 1985
Records Mr, Boncha Swing, Rhythmic Rhythmic, Sweetened Brown, Whisper Nite, Color Schemes, Remember, Never Let Me Go, Hutcherson (vib, mar), Mulgrew Miller (p), John Head (b), Billy Higgins (d), Arto (perc)

THESE TWO GOOD RECORDS complete the rehabilitation of Bobby Hutcherson, a player neglected by a hard jazz environment. Hutcherson's adventures in mood-soul are long past now and he's been back with the cats for several years, though only the excellent *Solo Quartet* album for Contemporary has provided recorded evidence. His two LPs for Orm Keane's Landmark label are colourful and buoyant; they don't touch many emotional bases but it's accomplished jazz.

Hutcherson has simplified his impressionism: the starkness of some of his Blue Note dates seldom intrudes here, and there is nothing as suspended and eerie as, say,

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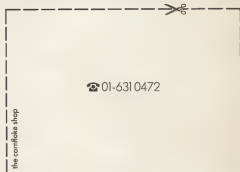
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"Bouquet" from the great *Happenings* LP. He remains a swinging player: the best pleasures of the LPs come from the way he kicks into his solos and decorates the crackling pulse laid down by Billy Higgins and the exotic Airto (Philly Joe is a less suitable presence).

"Remember" is a terrific performance, Irving Berlin's tune thoroughly shaken up by the band. Hutchinson's marimba is lyrical in a very simple-hearted way: lacking the resonance of vibes it makes an oddly touching ballad out of "Never Let Me Go".

I prefer *Color Scheme* because the band is sharper. Branford Marsalis adds little to *Good Bait*, and the recording has the leader less finely etched in. But both records show Bobby Hutchinson on a confident path back to his best form.

Richard Cook

GRUPPO JAZZ MARCA MITTELEUROPA

(Gruppo Jazz Marca)

Recorded: Treviso, Italy, 27 October 1985

Citta Di Frontiera, Dadelin, Annamaria, Ton Dadelin, Blue Tuxedo

Andrea Soriani (tr), Sergio Campagnoli (sax), Fritze Martin (ts), Tiziano Sestini (tbl), Roberto Magris (p), Roberto Casaveri (g), Naveiro Tasci (vib, perc), Lilli Furlan (db), Franco Polisseni (cl)

"L'ETÀ DI FRONTERA" OPENS WITH A BRILLIANT introduction by the horns, followed by an unaccompanied guitar solo, next the horns return with the rhythm punctuating, Magris entering last. This pianist then solos, and behind him we get a regular pulse, he is very accomplished in an updated bop manner and has a wide range of gesture that seems to come, indeed, from having listened to many post-bop keyboard men. The band shifts tempos easily, and soon the horns reappear, actively supporting Magris. But then there is a bass solo that is like most other bass solos, except that Magris accompanies with imaginative discontinuity. It is succeeded by some interesting ensemble textures, and then a drum solo like most other drum solos. The guitar resumes, then the horns punctuated by the rhythm, including the piano, almost as in the beginning.

So this is a skilled and hence relaxed group, stylistically quite conservative, with at any rate one fine soloist, its leader — who also composed four of the five themes. In fact the Gruppo Jazz Marca performs only its own original material. It began about ten years ago, has made two previous LPs, appeared at various festivals, and Magris has done some playing with the likes of Kai Windling and Lockjaw Davis. He again shines on "Dedalus", with ideas related to, yet different from, those heard in "Citta Di Frontiera". "Annamaria" is short, nearly an aphorism, and accounts of the other tracks scarcely seem necessary. Magris's piano work is to the fore throughout (mainly out of tempo in "Blues Transfer") and is always worth hearing. There are brief, energetic interludes from the

ensemble of horns, and, alas, further bass solos; another from the drummer, too, on "Blues Transfer". Perhaps next time we shall hear what the horns can do in the way of improvising.

Max Harrison

ROCHESTER-VEASLEY BAND ONE MINUTE OF LOVE

(Gramavision 18-8505-1)

Recorded: Gramavision studios, Feb/Mar 1985

Showtime, Secret Weapon, Butt Bop, Tokyo Street, The Falling, One Minute Of Love, Give It To Me, Art Of Seduction, The Struggle (Free South Africa)
Gerald Veasley (tr, v), Cornell Rochester (db), Willie Williams (ss, ts), Uri Caine (ky), Gene Tennant (g), James Blood Ulmer (gtr), "The Struggle", John Zorn (as on "Give It To Me")

"GIVE IT TO ME GIVE IT TO ME" a monotone apparently stolen from NY electrodrone rockers Suicide, Veasley is telling us how computers have changed the whole game. Drum machines have put drum people into creative ferment, or our of work, programmed improvisation gets the studio's luck's gig ("Oh, computers can play bebop," says George Lewis in the bar at the Inca festival: he knows only good can come of that): and digital sampling has slit open the whole mix-mess side of it. NY, these last ten years, seems to have been an orgy of cross-feasting — HipHoppers taking the biscuit, but Harmolodians not all that far behind, and a vastly complex and incestuous art-rock underground falling in and out and all about behind them. So that if R/V sound like any one thing for more than a few seconds at a time, we shouldn't be that surprised that it's a thing somewhere between the much-missed Defunk and the undervalued Concretions.

"Showtime" opens to delicate swing, and before you've quite connected, it's cracked through electro pastiche into an explosive free chart: this unerring rhythm empathy is the kind of thing Shannon Jackson's been working on, to play together and stay together across the most outrageous time shifts. Even at the relatively minor level of superb technique, this is a fine record, but its tricky and dense exuberance — Uri Caine especially having a lot of fun huffing his colleagues — means the emphasis is on inaudescence rather than simply fast fingering.

This is a post-modern age, and tape-splicing as its articulation: the physical trace of history can be erased, and all the world can be edited by anyone. If music prefigures the shape of thought to come, then *One Minute* — is a great way to start second-guessing the future and if it doesn't, well, there's something hypnotically exciting about these players flashing through the styles. When Captain Blood finally arrives for "The Struggle" he sounds as carefully traditional in his wisdom as Ben Webster on a Cecil Taylor session.

Mark Sinker

FAST LICKS

HOWARD MCGHEE: *Dusty Blue* (*Affinity AFF 156*). A mix of seven-piece and quarter tracks from 1960. Whatever the setting, McGhee is flawlessly "correct" at every point, like a reformed alcoholic at a drinks party. The rhythm section of Tommy Flanagan, the 20-year-old Ron Carter and Walter Bolden play beautifully and in the larger line-up there's the added bonus of baritoneist Pepper Adams. McGhee's title track and a seductive quarter "I Concentrate On You" stick out, but there's not a dud track in sight.

Brian Morton

DEXTER GORDON: *Our Man In Paris* (*Blue Note BST 84146*). From the first notes of "Scapple From The Apple" you know you're in the presence of something extraordinary. Side two opens with the Lester Young favourite "Birdway" done with a breadth of imagination that confirms Gordon's place between Prez and both Trane and Rollins. If this is "transitional" in any sense, it's also fully and admirably achieved. And with Bud Powell, Pierre Michelot, Kenny Clarke behind you, you could hardly lose.

Brian Morton

VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Piano Portraits Vols 1 & 2* (AFS 1022/8). A couple of raggedly compilations of about two decades of piano boogie, stride, swing, rags. Many very good things and some rarities by Cleo Brown and Clarence Profitt, but they don't make a lot of sense as collections.

Richard Cook



JUNE CHRISTY: *The Best Thing For You* (*Affinity AFF 145*). June Christy, remembered mostly as Stan Kenton's singer, made some luscious Capitol LPs, especially *The Merry Aloha Christy*. The voice is rather hard and strong but she could coax some sorrows out of a ballad: get someone to play you "Something Cool". It's almost perfect.

Richard Cook

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KENNY DORHAM: *'Round About Midnight At The Café Bohemia (Blue Note BST 81524)*. A never predictable mix of standards and originals. Dorham is superb on his own "Monaco" and on the up-tempo "Mexico City". Kenny Burrell weighs in with a fine guitar solo on "A Nigra In Tunasia" and there are reminders by the bucketful of how good a player J. R. Monterose (ts) could be in the right company. Highly recommended.

Brian Morton

KIM KASKASHIAN/ROBERT LEVIN: *Elegies (ECM 1316)*. Another in the label's 'New Series' of classical works. These are duo and sonata pieces for piano (Levin) and, unusually, viola. Elegies and romances, in fact, from Britten, Vaughan Williams, Elliott Carter, Glasunow, Liszt, Kodaly, and the more obscure Henri Vieuxtemps, best remembered now for once having been court violinist to Czar Nicholas I. The mix of genre and period keeps the interest level up and the musicianship is impeccable but repeated listenings betray a rather hollow core.

Brian Morton

LENNIE NIEHAUS: *Vol 3 The Octet #2 (Contemporary COP 017)*. In the days After Bird many an alto bell was acted for runques of Penrecostal flame. Niehaus was, after Scott, perhaps the strongest contender for apostolic status and it's slightly odd how much his reputation has ebbed. These cuts, companion to the *Quintet and Octet #1* sets, date from 1955. Niehaus was no great writer and the best of the tunes here come courtesy of Berlin, Gershwin, Rodgers & Hart, Jimmy Giullie (on baritone sax this time), Stu Williamson and Bob Envelindsen star up the ensembles and without them, one suspects, the man Lennie might sound a tad thin. Hands up all those who think Shelly Manne's a genius. He's on this as well. Buy.

Brian Morton

EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS: *That's All (Gate 7019)*. Davis' familiar big sound, reminiscent of Ben Webster's, is much in evidence on this 1985 Paris session, but its effectiveness is marred by the MOR backing of Lou Bennett on organ and Teddy Martin on violin. A pity, because Davis' intimate,

conversational ballad style, particularly on the stand-out track "That's All", and his muscular, earthy up-tempo work deserve better.

Chris Parker

KEITH GREKO: *Last Train Outta Flagstaff (Cowart VL 4)*. Two agreeable quartet dates headed up by pianist Greko, one with Bud Shank and one with Joe Henderson. Neither is at his peak and Joe just about takes the honours in a nice "All The Things You Ate", but most purposeful of all is Greko himself, a scaly mix of Clate Fischer and

Richard Cook

DAVID MOSS: *Dense Band (Moerz Alava 02040)*. The usual crazy gang - Moss, Zorn, Faith, Lindsay - do the usual crazy things, rapping in the usual quota of innocents on the way. Me, I love it. Moss is in fine voice and if he's not very careful he's going to have a chart bit one of these days. And then we'll all be sorry.

Brian Morton

BACK ISSUES

1. Ron Blake, Camden on Camera, Eric Dolphy, Steve Lacy, Harold Land, Leo Records, Wynton Marsalis, Art Pepper tribute, Max Roach, Scattering & Bumping, Seven Steps to Jazz. Trumpet, John Stevens Part 1, Women Love.

8. Cadilla Records, Coltrane's A Love Supreme, Count Basie tribute, Ted Curson, Miles Davis concert, Festivals. Moers and Le Mans, Barry Gray, Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand), Metalanguage, Michel Petrucci, Seven Steps. Box.

9. Art Ensemble of Chicago, Benny Carter, Charly R&B, Andrew Cyrille, Manu Dibango, Tito Martin, Meredith Monk, Phil Murphy, Oliver Nelson's *The Blues and the Abstract Truth*.

10. Alterations, Armstrong's Wise End Blues, Amiri Baraka, Black Masks, Whitte Masks, Art Blakey, Biorhythms, *Jazz At The Phil* re-issues, Hugh Masekela, Thelma Houston, Jerry Wieder.

12. Afro Jazz, Laurie Anderson, Goss. But Not Forgotten. Vic Dickenson, Dennis Rose, Collin Walcott, Chris McGregor, Phil Minton, Roger Turner, New Year's Honours List, New York Lar & Lye.

14. Arts Council, Harry Belafonte, British Summer Time Ends, Kenny Clarke intones, Graham Collier, Eric Moss Overview, Hip London Scene, Intus Festival Jazz Festival, London Venues, Evan Parker's *Savannah Naks*, Round The Regions, John Surman.

15. Derek Bailey, Martha & Fugella Bass, George Benson, Essential Coltrane, Charles Mingus. *Prin-*

carthusus Erectus, Pat Metheny, Jim Mullen, Norma Winstone.

16. Anthony Braxton, Cotton Club, Peter King, Onyeka, Essential Dolphy, Incus Festival, Joe Sims, Gil Scott-Heron, Clifford Brown & Max Roach.

17. Ray Charles, John Gilmore, Herbie Nichols, Daniel Ponce, Jazz in Paris, Betty Boop, Paladin, Afro-Jazz.

18. Sunny Rollins, Bobby McFerrin, Joyce Cortez, Stanley Jordan, Tommy Chase, Bernard Taverne, Joe Farrell.

19. Ornette Coleman, Charlie Haden, Steve Lacy, Boyd Race, Slim Gaillard, *Movin' Jazz*, Peter Ind, Urban Sax.

20. Art Blakey, Wynton & Branford Marsalis, Bobbin Watson, Hank Mobley, Ganelin Trio, Bix Beiderbecke, Impulse & Blue Note reissues.

21. Cher Baker, Cuba, Jussuf Kadam, Tawana, Michael Nyman, Duke Ellington, Punks Zoo, Mari Wilson.

22. John Coltrane, Ruben Blades, Nathan Davis, James Blood Ulmer, Depravity, Guest Stars.

23. Bill Leavelle, Anita O'Day, Charlie Watts, Loose Tubes, Celia Cruz, Mathilde Santing, Lester Bowie, Donald Banks, Arno Limbay.

24. Betty Carter, John Abernethy, Sully Becho, Jimmy Smith, Maggie Nicols, Vienna Art Orchestra, Bill Evans, Zoro.

25. Young Sapphires Courtney Pine, Tommy Smith, Ian Rutledge, Nigel Hitchcock, Paul Moran, Eddie Thompson, Locking Berni, George Coleman, Jazz Cartoons, Chicago, New York, Duke Ellington.

26. Lester Young, Toure Kunda, Shankar, Jazz DJs, Gerry Mulligan, Gospel, Scottish Jazz Composers, Sun Ra, Terry Riley.

27. Miles Davis, Mose Allison, Evan Parker, Kintone, John Scofield, George Russell, Third Stream, Camden Jazz, Absolute Beginners.

28. Art Pepper, Terence Blanchard, Sweet Honey In The Rock, Ornette & Metheny, Clive Bell & Peter Cosack, New York.

29. Max Roach, Han Bennink, Billy Cobham, Incus Festival, Michael Heslges, Duke Ellington, Last Exit, Dominus Sepire.

30. Chino Freeman, The Fall, Alex Schlippenbach, Eddie Harris, Chicago, Sam & Clark Tracy, Benny Goodman, Hank Mobley.

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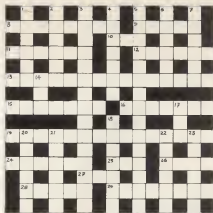
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ACROSS

- 8 Colourful atmosphere: Tuneless, too (4, 4)
 9 Middle-class improvisers (3)
 10 Engaging occasion (3)
 11 To begin with, an song should be without it (1, 3)
 12 National Opinion Poll and old that measure make sense: Dove's 50s Oats leaderless (2, 4)
 13 Brush boy crying, Robert? You'll make a singer of him yet! (5, 4, 6)
 15 Prime Minister mixed-up but head-gear still in position: Little missing, perhaps, from town (7)
 16 Keep doubly quiet in the middle of joint and, initially, leave Roach to the end: Pepper, we hear, added at one time (7)
 19 Weld Ark W.C. ball, Ed! Instruction for drummer (6, 9)
 24 Bird song-bird! (6)
 25 Not Pope, but Lorenzo! (3)
 26 Short fragment of 19... (4)
 27 Little Scottish gazman? (3)
 28 Simply... what Globe Orchestra do, (5)
 29 Latent half inside? I see, I see... we, nearly, hear! It's all theoretical anyway (8)

DOWN

- 1 Alto Ed! No, Trombone Jack... familiarly! (3, 3)
 2 Latin teacher? (6)
 3 Dollie-job, Euse? Um! Just do a turn for this sanguine, fretting fellow! (5, 5, 3)
 4 Latin dance? (7)



- 5 Hocking cash-bus? Well... you can just unlock it again and find a corner, nearly! (5, 1, 8)
 6 Merely a coper? Much better than that! (5, 3)
 7 Add pound to young Scout and go back to Southern Region... that's where the jazz is! (1, 1, 1)
 14 Sheepish piano-man's frost (3)
 17 Greek 10th, we hear, for Record Co. (5)
 18 Out-of-tune Ptolemy? (4, 3)
 20 Tonic freak? (6)
 21 Fresh air and all-round tan leads to Sugar Hill (1, 5)
 22 Hot Seven Willie? (6)
 23 Up-tune Beethoven. (6)

Jazzword

Compiled by Tim Colwell

Answers next month

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS

ACROSS 1 Albert Ammons, (Wings); Carpenter, 10 Irene, 11 Pay Tax, 13 Melody; Getz-Like, 17 Lawrence, 20 Free Cats, 22 Candid, 26 Nice N. Bouncy, 27 In A Little (Spanish Town), 28 Sing For My Dad
 DOWN 1 ASCAP, 2 (Chew) Berry, 3 & 12 Across Reed and Ligature, 4 Axes (In My Pants) 5 Mornsey, 6 Nanna, 7 Delusion, 8 (Tex) Benke, 14 Lawrence (Brown), 16 Sarring, 19 Onanism, 20 Funk, 21 Congo, 23 Dared, 24 Dread, 25 Poco (Poma)

GAIL THOMPSON

So did you want to get an all-female band together at first?

"There don't seem to be that many good women players about - Annie Whitehead is one of them, though - and we certainly couldn't get a woman drummer. We tried to manage without for a while and then Harbens came into the shop and I asked him if he fancied a gig. I hadn't heard him play or anything, he just came and sat in. It didn't seem important any more to have an all-woman band. I mean, I've got nothing against feminism, but I don't see why you shouldn't use a man. It's not a novelty any more to have an all-woman band. The novelty is to have a token man in the band!"

"The image of jazz has to undergo a serious change or fade out. It's not just a matter of making the gig and going home. They should have special t-shirts for those people saying 'Where Did We Go Wrong?'"

Gail hosts with wicked glee for a couple of minutes.

I say, isn't that rather cruel, young whippersnapper?

"No. No, it's not cruel. They DWELL on it, dwell on the 50s. I'm sure it was great in those days, it was pop music then. I admit that I had that attitude at one time, but I sat back and looked at what I was doing. I aim to change that with my school. Kids need somewhere to go and develop after being inspired by records and things."

Continued from page 21

"I ALSO WANT TO TEACH beginners things like how to get a gig, tell them about contracts, confirmation slips, the MU. Even things like grants and bursaries. It's information you might read in specialised jazz magazines, but little kids on the dole in Stockwell or Battersea don't see those things. A guy came into the shop the other day and started playing this amazing bop thing on the guitar. He couldn't have been more than 16. I asked him where he learnt that and he said that he didn't even know what he was doing. He was a genius! He could have got onto any stage in London and played the shit out of it. He'd learnt from records without prompting. If he did have that technical knowledge, he'd be ridiculous. Monster! And that's what I aim to push. Those kids with cheap guitars, they're the stars of the next decade. They need the space to develop. At the school there's going to be practice booths for those who can't practise at home."

No more practising in the park for young hopefuls!

"... and we're going to have clinics where big stars come in, like Pat Metheny, and those kids get to sit in and play in those master classes. The movement can't survive on hype. It's got to have its own momentum."

Gail and Gail Force have yet to make a record - not that they haven't had offers. It's just that Gail has, of course, a plan.

"I want to get a publishing deal first and do

writing and arranging for us and other people, then record. We'll do commercial stuff, not necessarily 'jazz'. The important thing is to enjoy it. Some people go oh, that's only got three chords, that's boring, and go on to play six chords to the bar. That's a throwback to the old music attitude. They ignore the way those three chords are played, the life and the beat behind them. Then they whine, why aren't people buying my clever six-chords-to-the-bar? Why shouldn't we accept other forms of music which are simpler? It's accessible. People shouldn't be so narrow."

How on earth does Gail, the Shirley Connor of the swinging generation, manage to run a shop, manage a band, compose, teach and generally a whole culture?

"It's not that difficult. I have a timetable. I work out exactly what I'm going to be doing, where and how, a week in advance and I stick to that."

So where are you going to be playing this week?

"Er, I don't know. I haven't got my diary." Do we detect a note of panic creeping in? Here's one you can answer without your diary.

What lies at the pinnacle of your ambition?

"To play Central Park, or Wembley would do."

Look out, world. And keep those grubby old t-shirts covered up.

(Gail's shop is at 139 Stockwell Road and the main school will shortly function in the warehouse next door.)

THE WRITE PLACE

POST YOUR MOST TO UNITS G & H, 115 CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON W1P 5PN.

Beacon Sandwich

HAVING READ YOUR "complete" guide to jazz on the UK airwaves, I was surprised to find that the sole entry for Beacon Radio (West Midlands) was *Beacon Spring*, which – excellent as it is – does not represent the station's jazz output. That honour goes to *Beacon Jazz*, every Tuesday from nine till ten pm, a programme which I've had the pleasure of presenting since October 1978. A long enough period, surely, for you to have got your facts right. Is this omission yet another example of your London-based magazine not being too bothered about what happens north of Watford? There is life and jazz up here, you know!

Tony Richards, Wolverhampton

Consider it corrected, Tony. Actually, we got our info by ringing up your station and they didn't tell us about Beacon Jazz. We hope this doesn't mean they've forgotten about you – RC

Manny's Men

I READ BEN CHANT'S review (Wire 50) of the McCoy Tyner/Manny Oquendo/Daniel Ponce gig with interest. Readers have probably already heard of Tyner and Ponce but may be

unaware of Manny Oquendo and Conjunto Libre. Oquendo and Andy Gonzalez co-founded the group in October 1974 after working together in the orchestra of Eddie Palmieri.

Manny Oquendo was born in Brooklyn in 1931, of Puerto Rican parents, and literally grew up on Latin music. In the 30s his family lived over Almacenas Hernandez, then one of El Barrio's leading Latin record stores. By 1946 Manny was playing timbales with Charlie Valero and Marcelino Guerra, in 1947 with Chano Pozo and by 1948 with Jose Curbelo. In the 50s he played and recorded with Tito Rodriguez, Tito Puente, Miguelito Valdes, Vicencio Valdes, Johnny Barbiero, Charlie Palmieri and Larry Harlow, among others. From 1962–67 he helped to establish the *trabamanga* (trumpets and flute) sound with Eddie Palmieri and Conjunto La Perfecta and fused the "Mozambique" rhythm out of Cuban *comparisa* rhythms.

Andy Gonzalez, the musical director of Conjunto Libre, was born in New York in 1951. In the 60s he played with his brother Jerry in the Latin Jazz Quintet and then with Mongo Santamaria, Kenny Dorham, Ray Barretto, Dizzy Gillespie and Clifford Thornton. In the early 70s he joined Eddie Palmieri's Orquesta.

The founding concept of Conjunto Libre was

that it should be a band based in Latin roots with a jazzier, freer sound. They have perpetrated the *trabamanga* line-up pioneered in Conjunto La Perfecta.

To date, the band has released five albums. *Con Salsa* . . . *Con Ritmo Vol 1* (Salsoul SAL 4109), *Tres Calidad Con Salsa* . . . *Con Ritmo Vol 2* (SAL 4114), *Los Laderos De La Salsa* (SAL 4122), *Invisible* (SAL 4126) and *Somalo. Estilo Y Ritmo* (Montuno MLP 522).

John Childs, London N22

Continued On Page 97

I ENJOYED THE intelligent article on The Fall . . . but was puzzled by its lack of continuity. Continued on page 46 it says on page 21, but on turning to that page, nothing on The Fall. On page 48, a rather disjointed continuation of the article, the gist of which didn't match up with what had gone before. What happened!

David Grimbleby, Southport

Not too much, David. Sorry there was a mix-up of the page numbers – but the article did carry straight on on page 48, except a line dropped in error. Try and imagine the town beginning "Dragons may well be the most provocative and resonant . . ." Apologies, everyone – RC.

Coxhill/Miller



PLAYLISTS

LOUIS MORELO SPIRITS REJOICE (*Ogon*)
EVAN PARKER SIX OF ONE (*Janis*)
LEIGH HUMPHREY N'Tango Fur Gitti (*FALP*)
HARRY MILLER DOWN SOUTH (*Varijazz*)
KEITH TIPPETT FRANCES (*Ogon*)
VIENNA ART ORCHESTRA CONCERTO PICCOLO (*Hai Art*)
GANSFELD TRIO LIVE IN EAST GERMANY (*Lao*)
GUNTHER R SOMMER ASCENDANT POUR LE 28 (*Nato*)
MAARLEN AITENA PISA (*Classica*)
MIKE WINTHROP MAR HANG SON (*Dream*)
Ricardo Bergerone, Torino, Italy

GARBAREK/SHANKAR Song For Everyone (*ECM*)
JANPER VAN'T HOF Pili Pili (*WEA*)
SOFT MACHINE 4 (*CBS*)
JAN GARBAREK Afric Pepperbird (*ECM*)
CARLA BLEY Nighr Glo (*Watt*)
ROBERT WYATT Old Rottenhat (*Rough Trade*)
THE MUSIC IMPROVISATION COMPANY (*ECM*)
PHEBE MOERLEN'S GONG: Leave It Open (*Arista*)
LOU COXHILL/STEVE MILLER (*Caroline*)
NICK MANON Fictitious Sports (*Harvest*)
Greg Robinson, Lancaster

MILES DAVIS Live Evil (*CBS*)
MANU DIBANGO ELECTRIC AFRICA (*Columbia*)
THE REAL ROXANNE & HITMAN HOWIE THE BANG ZOOM Let's GoGo (*Cooltempo*)
ORNFITE COLEMAN Body Meta (*Artists House*)
CHALK OUT OF THE FLESH (*Dovetail*)
MATERIAL MEMORY SERVES (*Celluloid*)
ERIK DOLPHY/MAI WALDRON (*Prestige*)
KURTIS BLOW Party Time (*Mercury*)
FRANKIE H Greastest Hits (*Westbound*)
JOHN MCLAUGHLIN/DAVE HOLLAND/JOHN SURMAN Where Fortune Smiles (*Pye*)
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DIAMANDA GALAN The voice, it hurts
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